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ANTONIO CANOVA,



IN

SCULPTURE AND MODELLING,

ENGRAVED IN OUTLINE



BY HENRY MOSES;

WITH

DESCRIPTIONS FROM THE ITALIAN

OF THE

COUNTESS ALBRIZZI,

AND

A BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

вч

COUNT CICOGNARA.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

SEPTIMUS PROWETT, STRAND.

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VOL. I.

STATUES AND GROUPS.

- 1773 Statue of Eurydice, the size of life, in soft stone, now in the Villa Falier, at Asolo.
- 1776 Statue of Orpheus, size of life, in soft stone, exhibited among the other productions of the Academy of Venice, at the festival of the Ascension, afterward removed to the Villa Falier.
- 1779 Dædalus and Icarus, a group in the natural size, in Carrara marble, at present in the Casa Pisani San Paolo at Venice.
- 1780 Statue of the Marquis Poleni, in soft stone of Vicenza; height $7\frac{1}{2}$ Venetian feet, executed for the Patrician Leonardo Venier, and

 placed in the Prato della Valle at Padua.
- 1782 Theseus on the body of the Minotaur, a group, in Carrara marble, of the size of life, executed at the instigation of the Chevalier Girolamo Zulian, then Venetian Ambassador at Rome, and became the property of Count de Frics at Vienna.
- 1783 Models of the Allegorical Figures of Piety and Meekness, intended for the tomb of Ganganelli.
- 1789 Statue of Psyche in marble, executed for Sir Henry Blundell; a repetition of this statue was intended by Canova as a tribute of gratitude to his patron, the Chevalier Girolamo Zulian; the death of this Nobleman happening previously to its completion, it passed into the hands of Napoleon, who presented it to the Queen of Bavaria—it is now at Monaco.
- Statue of a Cupid in marble.
- 1793 Group of Cupid and Psyche in a recumbent posture, executed in Carrara marble for Colonel Campbell, afterward Earl Brownlow; after various changes it was possessed by Murat, and placed in the royal palace of Compeigne near Paris; the model had been made in 1787—this group was repeated in 1796, for the Russian Prince Youssouppoff.

- 1795 Group of Venus and Adonis, executed the size of life, in Carrara marble, for the Marquis Berio, after whose death it became the property of M. Favre, of Geneva.
- 1796 Statue of the Magdalen, the size of life, intended by the Sculptor as a gift to his country, but through political events it came into the possession of M. Juliot, the French Commissary, and is now at Paris, in the possession of Count Sommariva of Milan.
- Venice: this statue was repeated several times with only slight alterations of detail; the most perfect is, perhaps, that in possession of Lord Cawdor.
- 1797 Group of Cupid and Psyche in an upright posture, executed in marble for Murat, and placed, with the recumbent group, in the palace at Compeigne; this group was repeated in 1800 for the Empress Josephine, which is now in possession of the Emperor of Russia.
- 1800 Statue of Perseus holding the head of Medusa, in marble, of the size of the Apollo di Belvedere; this work was intended for Signior Bossi, the painter, of Milan, but its removal from Rome was forbidden by Pope Pius VII., who placed it in the Vatican Museum.
- Creugas and Damoxenus, (the Pugilists,) the size of life, placed by Pius VII. in the same museum.
- --- Colossal Statue of Ferdinand the Fourth, King of the Sicilies, now at Naples.
- 1802 Colossal Group of Hereules and Lychas, executed in Carrara marble, from a model made in 1795, now in the gallery of the Torlonia Palace at Rome.
- 1803 Colossal Statue of Napoleon Bonaparte, in Carrara marble; height
 16 Roman palms; completed and sent to Paris in 1811; now
 in possession of the Duke of Wellington; it was also east in
 Brouze, which is now in the Palace of the Arts at Milan.
- 1804 Colossal Statue of Palamedes, executed in marble for the Count Sommariva, and is now in his villa on the lake of Como.
- 1805 A Sitting Statue of Madame Bonaparte, in Carrara marble of the size of life; now in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire.
- A Recumbent Statue, in marble, of Venus Vietrix, the natural size; the face is a portrait of the Princess Paulina Bonaparte Borghese.
- Statue of Venus coming out of the Bath, executed for the Pitti Gallery at Florence; size rather larger than that of the Venus de' Mediei; this statue was repeated in marble for the King of Bavaria, and also for the Prince di Canino; the latter is now in the possession of the Marquis of Lansdown.

- 1805 Colossal Group of Theseus and the Centaur, intended for the city of Milan, now in the Imperial gardens at Vienna; it was completed in 1819.
- Three Statues of Dancing Girls; the first executed for the Empress Josephine; the second executed for Signior Dominico Manzoni, of Forli; the third for a Russian Nobleman.
- 1806 A Sitting Statue of the Princess Lcopoldina Esterhazy, size of life; now in the palace of Litehtenstein.
- 1807 Statue of Paris, in Carrara marble, of the size of life, executed for the Empress Josephine, now in the possession of the Emperor of Russia; a repetition of this statue for the hereditary Prince of Bavaria was completed in 1816.
- 1808 Semi-Colossal Statues of Heetor and Ajax, left in the study of the Sculptor; that of Ajax was not commenced until 1811.
- Statue of the Muse Terpsichore, now in possession of Count Sommariva at Paris; it was repeated with some small alterations for Sir Simon Clarke.
- 1811 A Sitting Statue of the Empress Maria Louisa, in the natural size, with the Attributes of the Goddess Concordia, now in the palace at Parma.
- 1812 A Sitting Statue of the Muse Polymnia, now in the cabinet of the Empress at Vienna; this marble was originally intended for the Portrait of Maria Elisa, Princess of Lucca.
- —— Allegorieal Statue of Peace, size of life, executed for Count Romanzoff; completed in 1815.
- 1814 Group of the Graces, ordered by the Empress Josephine, completed for the Prince Eugene, and placed at Monaco; a repetition of this group, with slight alterations, was worked for the Duke of Bedford.
- 1815 Model of a Colossal Statue of Religion; height 16 Roman palms, to be worked in marble, of the height of 30 palms; it was worked in marble, with some alterations, and somewhat less than the model, for Lord Brownlow.
- --- A Recumbent Statue of a Nymph and a Cupid playing on a lyre, executed for Lord Cawdor, but given up by him to the seulptor, to become the property of the Prince Regent of England.
- 1816 Group of Mars and Venus, executed in marble, for his Britannic Majesty.
- 1817 An Infant, St. John the Baptist, in possession of Count Blaeas.
- 1818 A Sitting Statue of Washington, in marble, executed for the United States, and forwarded to America in 1820.
- Statue of Venus; a variation from that in the Pitti Gallery, completed in marble in 1820, in the possession of Thomas Hope, Esq.

- 1818 A Colossal Statue of Pius VI., executed in marble in 1822, and placed in the Church of St. Peter, at Rome.
- 1819 A recumbent Statue of the Magdalen, executed in marble, for the Earl of Liverpool; completed in 1822.

VOL. II.

BUSTS.

- 1805 Bust in Marble of Francis I. Emperor of Austria, executed for the Library of St. Mark, now at Vienna.
- 1808 A Bust in marble of the Princess di Canino.
- 1812 A Colossal Bust, in which the sculptor has given his own portrait.
- 1814 Bust of Helen, presented by the artist to the Countess Albrizzi, of Venice.
- Bust of the Muse Calliope, executed for Sigr. Gio. Rosini, of Pisa.
- 1817 An Ideal Femalé Head, done by order of Madame Grollier, and presented by her to Count Sommariva.
- 1819 Herma of Corinna, executed for the Count Sanseverino di Crema.
- -- Bust of Laura, executed for the Duke of Devonshire.
- -- Bust of the Muse Erato, in marble.
- --- Bust of Beatrice, executed for Count Leop. Cicognara.
- —— Bust of Leonora D'Este, in the possession of the Count Paolo Tosio of Brescia.

MONUMENTS.

- 1787 Tomb of Clement XIV. (Ganganclli), in the Church of the Holy Apostles, at Rome; height of the Pontiff 13 Roman palms; of the figures 11 palms; the architectural part is also the invention of the sculptor; the Clay Models, in the same size, were formed in 1783 and 1784.; the whole in Carrara marble.
- 1792 Tomb of Clement XIII. (Rezzonico), in the Church of St. Peter at Rome; height of the pontiff 19 palms; that of the Genius and Religion 15 palms; the Lions are also colossal; the idea of this monument, and several of the figures, are anterior in date to that of Ganganelli, also in Carrara marble.

- 1794 Monument of the Chevalier Emo, executed by order of the Venetian Scnate, and placed in the arsenal at Venice.
- 1804 Model of a Monument intended to be erected to the memory of Francesco Pesaro.
- 1805 Monument of Christina, Archduchess of Austria, in Carrara marble; the figures the size of life, erected in the Church of the Augustines at Vienna.
- 1806 Monument of the Countess D'Haro, daughter of the Marchioness de Santa Crux; figures in mezzo rilievo, of the natural size, left in the study of the sculptor.
- Sepulchral Vase, in marble, ornamented with small bas relief, to the memory of the Baroness Diede, situated at Padua.
- 1807 Monument of Alfieri, with a colossal figure of Italy, in the Church of Santa Croce, at Florence.
- 1808 Monument to the memory of Gio. Volpato, placed under the porch of the Church of the Holy Apostles, at Rome.
- Monument to the memory of Count Souza, placed in the Portuguese Church, at Rome; a repetition of this monument was executed and sent to Portugal.
- --- Monument to the memory of the Venetian Patrician, Gio. Falicr, executed as a tribute of the sculptor's gratitude; it was forwarded to Venice after the death of Canova.
- --- Monument to the memory of Frederick, Prince of Orange, erected at Padua.
- 1812 Monument to the memory of the Countess Mellerio, situated in the villa Mellerio, near Milan.
- Monument to the memory of Gio. Battista Mellerio; also in the villa Mellerio.
- 1815 Monument to the memory of Count Trento, erected at Vicenza.
- 1822 Monument in marble to the memory of Count Faustino Tadini, erected at Zovare.
 - The figures on the seven last monuments are in mezzo rilievo, and of the size of life.

BAS RELIEFS.

1790 The Death of Priam.

Briseis consigned to the heralds by Patroclus.

Socrates defending himself before his Judges.

Socrates sending away his Family before drinking the Poison.

Socrates drinking the Poison.

The Death of Socrates.

The Return of Telemachus.

1792 The Offering of the Trojan Matrons.

1795 Instruction, or the Good Mother. Charity, or Good Works.

1797 Venus Dancing with the Graces.
The Infant Bacchus.
Socrates rescuing Alcibiades.

1801 Hercules Infuriate.

Helen carried off by Theseus.

All these has reliefs are left in the models, except that of Socrates sending away his Family, which was executed in marble by Canova, and is now the property of Chevalier Guiseppe Commello of Venice.



BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR.

Antonio Canova was born in 1757, at Possagno, a village situated amidst the Asolani hills at the foot of the Venetian Alps. Pietro, his father, and also Pasino, his grandfather, were sculptors of repute at that time, as their numerous productions attest, consisting chiefly of monuments, altars, and similar works consecrated to religious purposes, in the churches of that district. By the death of his father, Antonio become an orphan in the third year of his age, and his mother Angela Zardo marrying shortly afterwards, and returning to her native town of Crespano, the infant was left to the care of his paternal aunt, Caterina Ceccato, by whom he was affectionately nurtured. His mother had by her second marriage, his step-brother the present Abbate Giovanni Battisti Sartori.

Deprived of his father, young Antonio was indebted for the rudiments of his art to his grandfather Pasino, who adopted the excellent method of teaching him early the familiar use of the implements of sculpture, employing him on the works on which he was himself engaged. By this useful discipline, his hand acquired mechanical skill, while his mind was growing to maturity, and he early possessed the advantage of being able to execute the rapid and instantaneous conceptions of his genius, with a corresponding facility.

It happened at this time that Giuseppe Bernardi, surnamed Torretto, nephew and pupil of old Torretto, who was one of the best of the Venetian sculptors, was staying for some years at Pagnano, a short distance from the villa of Asolo, where the patrician Giovanni Falier took so much pleasure in embellishing his palace with the works of contemporary artists. This nobleman observing the strong disposition of the youth for the arts, placed him with Torretto, with the view of facilitating his progress, and farther engaged that he should accompany the artist to Venice, when the works on which he was employed should be completed, and which accordingly took place in about two years after.

By the death of Torretto, Canova was left without any guidance or restraint, having received from his master only the first instructions in his art, and before he had acquired the maturity of strength necessary for venturing on the new and arduous career to which he even then felt himself incited by the most auspicious confidence. had enjoyed, however, ever since his arrival at Venice the protection of his excellent patron Falier, and found an immense source of knowledge and improvement in the gallery of plaster casts of the Commendatore Farsetti, comprising all the celebrated remains of antiquity, and which, with a noble liberality, was devoted to the use of young students, and the public curiosity. was also at that time an academy at Venice, calculated to excite a spirit of emulation among the young artists, but which was not enlightened by those juster principles whose influence began then to be partially visible, and was precursory of a new revival of the arts in Europe.

Young Antonio was now placed with the sculptor Gio Ferrari, Torretto's nephew, and worked with him on the statues that embellish the gardens of the Casa Tiepolo, at Carbonara: here he had young Gattinoni for his associate and rival, whose death, however, happened soon after, when he had excited high expectations of future eminence. Canova did not continue in this school for more than one year; for, becoming strongly convinced of the necessity of a wide deviation from the rules of art, which he saw practised, he boldly resolved to endeavour to explore those paths which, he thought, had been used by the ancients, and from which he beheld with surprise and regret the departure of his contemporaries. His proficiency even at that early age was considerable, as it is attested by the two · baskets of fruit which he sculptured in marble, in his fourteenth year, and which are yet to be seen on the first landing place of the Farsetti palace, now the Hotel della Gran Brettagna, at Venice.

His first effort was a group of Orpheus and Eurydice in the natural size, taken at the moment when forgetting the cruel prohibition, he sees his mistress separated from him for ever; a subject which is, perhaps, more suitable to the canvass than to marble, from the smoke and flames in which the figures are usually involved. The statue of Eurydice was completed in his sixteenth year, while passing the summer at the villa of his patron, having previously studied the model at Venice: that of Orpheus was begun the following year, in a study which he then occupied on the ground-floor of the inner cloister of St. Stephano. This composition, in soft stone, was publicly exhibited in Venice, on the

occasion of the festival of the Ascension, and first awakened the admiration and ambition of his countrymen, who then began clearly to foresee the meridian glories announced by so bright a dawn. These two statues are now preserved in the Falier palace at Asolo. In the following year he repeated this subject in marble, in a rather smaller size, for the senator M. Antonio Grimani. The destiny of this group has been remarkable, the figures having been separated from each other; and the fate of that of Eurydice being even now unknown; the Orpheus was sold by Grimani to Sig. Lorenzo Vanzetti of Vicenza, and afterward resold by him for a considerable sum, and sent to Vienna, having had some injuries, which it had suffered, previously restored by the sculptor Bosa. A still worse fortune befel the statues of Apollo and Daphne, which he had sketched in soft stone, which were destroyed by the brother of the late Luigi Verona at Padua: but the most elaborate composition which Canova executed previously to his departure from Venice, was the group of Dedalus and Icarus, in which he more signally evinced his daring abandonment of conventional modes, and his entire devotion to the guidance of nature. This group, which is now in the Casa Barbarigo Pisani, was executed in a more convenient study, which had been procured for him near to the passage of St. Maurizio, where he also sculptured the statue of Esculapius, and one of the Marquess Poleni: the former being now in the villa Cromer at Monselice, the latter in the Prato at Padua.

The rapidity of his progress now prompted his illustrious patron to procure for him more adequate means,

and a loftier theatre for the exercise of his powers; which he effected in concert with the Chevalier Girolamo Zulian, who was at that time the Venetian embassador to the Holy See, and his intimate friend; procuring for the young artist the means of visiting Rome, and of pursuing his studies there with every necessary advantage. Accordingly in December, 1780, Canova entered for the first time that seat of the arts, little imagining that he was destined to attain there to the highest rank and to establish rules of art, by his example, which would extend their influence to the remotest posterity. year had elapsed from the date of his arrival at Rome, before a pension from the Venetian government was obtained for his support: this was, however, finally decreed in the following December, consisting of an annual allowance of 300 Venetian ducats, for three years, a sum fully equal to the moderate wants of the artist, and which, although it does not exceed the half of the stipend now granted in similar cases, was at that time thought amply sufficient.

On his first arrival at Rome, Canova had experienced the kindest reception from the Venetian embassador, and had free access to his splendid mansion. This enlightened and accomplished nobleman soon becoming impressed with a high sense of the merit and powers of the young sculptor, procured from Venice a cast in plaster of the group of Dedalus and Icarus, which he had executed in that city, for the purpose of exhibiting it to the artists and connoisseurs at Rome. The house of the embassador was, indeed, a kind of athenœum, and frequented by all those most distinguished by talents and genius in that city. On

the occasion of the first production of this group, he was surrounded by Cades, Volpato, Battoni, Gavin Hamilton, Puccini, and many other distinguished artists and critics, who contemplated the work with silent astonishment, not daring to censure what, although at variance with the style then followed, commanded their admiration, and revealed the brightest prospects. The embarrassment of the youth at this juncture was extreme, and he frequently spoke of it afterward, as of one of the most anxious moments of his life; from this state he was, however, soon relieved, by the friendly and paternal address of Gavin Hamilton exciting him to unite with so exact and beautiful an imitation of nature, the fine taste and beau ideal of the ancients, of which Rome contained so many models, predicting at the same time, that by such a course he would greatly pass the limits which had been reached by the moderns; but the censure which he overheard from one who stood behind him, was more agreeable to the young artist than any direct eulogium: this Aristarchus observed, that from the effect produced on the observer, by the naked forms so carefully finished in this group, they must have been taken from the life, when in reality they were wholly the result of his severe study of the human form, entirely unassisted by mechanical means: this greatly encouraged the young artist, and convinced him that he had already raised himself above the mediocrity of his contemporaries.

From the moment of his arrival at Rome he had commenced a severe and profound study of the great models of ancient art, without however neglecting the fruits of his previous close observance of nature, the expression of which he always proposed to himself to make a distinguishing quality in his works. He had a profound contempt for all conventional modes in the arts, and was led even in that early age, by a correct taste, rather than by instruction, to prefer, among the monuments of ancient art, those which were of the age of Phidias, in which the lofty conceptions of the artist are most closely united with truth of expression; a 'decision which has since been fully confirmed by the exhibition made to Europe by the British Museum, of the first certain monuments of the arts of that era.

It may be proper to take here a slight survey of the various circumstances which had promoted the improvement in the arts previously to the arrival of Canova at Rome, for the influence of the genius of one man could not have been wholly adequate to the reconducting of art into its true but forsaken paths, unless the approach to them had been cleared by the sound judgment of some of his predecessors, and without the aid of other favouring circumstances: indeed, the influence of established practice and professional jealousy created no trifling obstacles to the progress of Canova; These, however, his modest and unpresuming conduct aided greatly to remove, while an air of triumph and superiority would, by wounding the feelings of his rivals, have created additional opposition. Already, however, many causes had existed tending to an improvement in the arts; among them may be enumerated the encouragement to right studies given by the Marquess Tanucci, at Naples; the protection afforded to literature and the arts at the courts of Charles III.,

Leopold, Benedict XIV., Clement XIV., Pius VI., and by Cardinal Silvio Valenti, the Colbert of the Holy See; by the Albani, the Zelada, and the Borgia; the studies of Mazzocchi, Bajardi, Galliani, of the two Venuti, of Maffei, Gesnero, Gori, Passeri, Paoli, and Amaduzzi; the good taste diffused by Cochin, Bellicard, Burlington, Mariette, and Sir William Hamilton; the Herculaneum discoveries; the Travels of Saint Non. Norden, Pocock, Wheeler, Spon, Revet, and Stuart; the exact admeasurement of ancient architecture by Des Godetz; the masterly works of the Piranesi on the Antiquities of Rome; the illustration and rendering public of galleries and museums, by means of engraved copies; the opening of baths; the study of the galleries of the Vatican; the excavation of old edifices; the collection and illustration of old inscriptions by Morcelli Marini, Zoega, Fea and Akerblad; the great works of Visconti and Winkleman; the enlightened taste of the Earl of Bristol, and of the Ambassador D'Azara, for these studies; the genius and profound erudition of Hancarville; the valuable collections of Hamilton, Jenkins, and Agincourt; the perfection of the intaglios of Pickler; the fine and bold designs of Flaxman; the attractions given to these studies by the accomplished Algarotti; the triumph over prejudices of the formidable Milizia; the labours of Temanza and Lanzi-these all supplied immense sources of aid to the young Phidias, and seemed to him to point out that moment as the favourable one for the giving of a different direction to sculpture from that which was pursued by living masters.

It is remarkable that both sculpture and architecture

should, at this time, owe their revival to the genius of Venetians; for while Canova was sculpturing his first great works at Rome. Ottone Calderari was reviving the Grecian taste in Vicenza, and Querenghi at St. Petersburgh, was fulfilling, in a masterly style, the magnificent views of that imperial court, by the erection of sumptuous and elegant edifices of every description. It must be allowed, however, that no ordinary degree of genius and courage was required to break loose from the false and vicious rules of art which then prevailed, particularly in sculpture, as not one of his contemporaries had, with all the incitements which have been enumerated, yet advanced a single step in that direction. Indeed, the works which Canova first saw in Rome, the productions of Agostino Penna, Pacili, Bracci, Sibilla, Pacetti, and Angilini, are already sunken into total neglect; neither can we discover in them the source of the slightest excitement to the improved style which the Venetian pupil afterward required.

The Chevalier Zulian now saw the importance of giving effective assistance to the developing powers of Canova; he, therefore, placed at his command a fine block of marble, to be devoted to a subject of his own choice, and to shew the profit derived from his residence and studies at Rome. This was the first marble sculptured by Canova, on those true principles by which he had proposed to himself to be guided in his works, a composition by which a new path was opened to all the productions of the imitative arts. The subject which he chose was Theseus, conqueror of the Minotaur, and the work was conducted throughout in

the palace of the Venetian Embassador. It was a highly interesting moment, when his excellent patron produced a cast of the head only of the Theseus to a party of the first artists and critics assembled in his house, without informing them whence it had been obtained; all concurred, however varying in other points, in pronouncing it to be of Grecian workmanship; many thought they had seen the marble from which it had been taken, not being able however to recollect exactly where it was; but when the Embassador conducted them before the original and entire group, their surprise was indeed extreme, and they were forced to exclaim, that by this work art had commenced a new career; on this occasion it may be said that Theseus was the conqueror, not only of the Minotaur, but of Envy also, forcing from rival artists the first homage of their admiration of Canova, who, at so early an age, had raised art to a higher degree of perfection than had been attained by any sculptor since its revival in Italy.

Before the expiration of the period for which his pension had been granted by the Venetian senate, the judgment and friendship of Gio. Volpato procured for him the commission to execute a monument for the celebrated Ganganelli; this flattering offer he would not however accept without the permission of the Venetian Government. This being obtained, by which he was left entirely at liberty in the choice of the place of his abode and in the exercise of his talents, he gave up his study in Venice, which was finally closed in 1783, and returning to Rome, applied himself wholly to this great work.

which proved the means of raising his fame to the very highest rank. Previously to this undertaking, he had sculptured at Rome only his Theseus abovementioned, and a small statue of Apollo, in the act of crowning himself, which he presented to the Senator Abondio Rezzonico, one of his patrons, who died in 1782. That severest of critics in the fine arts, Francesco Milizia, a man of profound judgment and independent mind, but violent and bitter in the expression of his critical opinions, was struck with astonishment at the excellency of the execution of the monument of Ganganelli, and openly declared the highest admiration of it in his letters-it also received the high encomiums of all possessing any knowledge and taste in such subjects. To Volpato posterity are much indebted, who, with judicious confidence in the talents of the young sculptor, procured the confiding of this work to him, and thus afforded an opportunity of making known his extraordinary powers to the world; the greatest capabilities being often unproductive, from the want of such favoring circumstances.

At the same time that this great work was in progress, he produced a youthful Psyche, and also modelled many other works, particularly those beautiful compositions in bas relief, which first opened the eyes of modern sculptors. These, which he used to model as a relief from more arduous studies, began to appear about the year 1790; and before any artist had ventured on any thing in this style: they were all left in the clay models, except that of Socrates parting with his family, which was worked in marble with great care and accuracy, and is now in the possession of the Chevalier Guiseppe Comello at Venice. Canova rarely

employed his chisel on portraits, or bas relief, leaving, in them, a field open for the exertions of minor artists, and dedicating himself with surprising ardour to the greater objects of collosal statues, monuments, and groups.

The commencement of one composition was not delayed until the completion of another, but while his chisel was still employed on the tomb of Ganganelli, he was forming the elay model of that of Pope Rezzonico, which was placed in the church of St. Peter in 1792; during the few succeeding years he executed several statues and groups of Cupid and Psyche variously represented; the group of Venus and Adonis; the monument of Emo, now in the arsenal at Venice; the first statue of Hebe, and the first of the Penitent Magdalen. All these works were completed before the expiration of the 18th century, so that in the course of twenty years he had produced a greater number of works than many laborious artists have in the whole of a long existence: and it should be remembered that the practice which he himself subsequently introduced for lessening the labour of the sculpture, by employing inferior workmen to reduce the block to the last stratum of the superficies, was not then in use. This adoption of mechanical aid he effeeted by forming his models of the exact size in which they were to be worked in marble, and with the utmost accuracy; he always, however, applied himself the last hand to his works, giving to his marbles a softness and delicacy of contour, and a minute accuracy of expression, for which we should look in vain in the works of others of that time. Indeed, the great superiority of Canova is more particularly seen in these last fine

touches of art, to which no one can perhaps equally attain, who has not early acquired a familiar use of the chisel, but trust their fame to the hands of subordinate artists; the last minute and finishing touches are those which require the highest powers of the artist, and are the means of producing his noblest effects; and in this respect the studious care of Canova is observable even in his latest works; but it is deeply to be regretted that the abuse of his physical powers in the early part of his life, when employed on his first great works, and the want of those pecuniary resources which he could afterwards command, greatly weakened his constitution; and he often declared that he was no longer able to sustain the enormous fatigues which the lions in the monument of Clement XIII., and certain drapery in that of Ganganelli had cost him; the use of the trapano, which is attended with a pressure on the breast, had already produced a depression on that part which was perhaps the origin of that complaint under which he finally sunk.

In 1799, the Prince Rezzonico having occasion to undertake a journey into Germany, was pleased to take Canova with him, with the view of affording him some relief and repose from the great abuse of his health and strength: he accordingly accompanied the Prince to Vienna and afterwards to Berlin. This journey was highly beneficial to Canova, by diverting him in some degree from his habits of too close application; and perhaps he was indebted to it for the many years which he afterward lived and devoted to his art.

It was during the interval from 1792 to 1799, that Canova found an agreeable relief in the occasional use

of the pencil, executing in all twenty-two pictures of various dimensions: after which he never resumed it until August 1821, when he retouched with great boldness the large painting which he had executed for the church of Possagno in 1797, of the height of twenty-eighth palms; the subject, the appearance of the Eternal Father to the three Marys, and the disciples lamenting over the body of Christ. It is not true, as has been sometimes stated, that he thought very highly of his pictures, and that they had withdrawn his attention from more important subjects. This is sufficiently refuted by the short period of his exercising the art, the extreme facility of their style, the unwillingness he had that they should pass into other hands, although very flatteringly sought after, and the modesty with which he shewed them rather as the fruits of his leisure hours than of his serious study. This recreation, in which he found so agreeable a relief, arose from his return to those habits of living to which he had been accustomed from his early youth at Venice; having contracted an intimate friendship with Mingardi, one of the best painters of that day, by which means he naturally became familiarized with the pallet: but the style which he saw practised at Rome was very different from that of the Venetian colourists who, still influenced by the true masters of the pencil, did not hold in much esteem the pictures of Mengs, Battoni, and Maron; and it was no little gratification to him when one of his heads, coloured from the mere recollection of the manner of Giorgione, was taken by the connoisseurs for the work of an old Venetian master.

The personal habits of Canova were throughout

his life regular and moderate; he rose early and immediately applied himself to his designing or modelling, and afterward to working in marble; he was always disposed to live abstemiously, as well from motives of health as of reflection, as his intense application had made him easily susceptible of severe stomach pains; and in his twenty-seventh year he was attacked by a violent and complicated disorder, which ever after threatened him from time to time with a return, requiring of him great caution, and confirming him in his natural disposition for a sober and regular mode of living. It was his daily custom to restore his powers by a short repose after eating; and the friends who dined with him always took care to introduce light and diverting topics of conversation, and to avoid subjects of the arts, or of a nature to highly excite his imagination or feelings; a slight emotion having the effect of disturbing his usual repose. He seldom went from home, but passed his evenings in receiving his friends, with an extreme gentleness and urbanity of manners, but without the slightest approach to meanness or affectation.

It was his constant rule not to have pupils, at least in the strict sense of the term, and was used to assign as a reason for it, that if a youth of good capabilities were to study under him, the merit of his works would be attributed to the master, who would thus derive from it the benefit due to the unrequited pupil: but it was his invariable custom, whenever a young artist evinced more than ordinary power, or when any one of his workmen raised himself above mediocrity, to give him every encouragement, to procure commissions, for

him, and even to set him to work on his own account; as in the instance of his causing to be sculptured at his own expense, so large a portion of the statues which adorned the Pantheon, but which have since their expulsion thence, been received into the various galleries of the Capitoline museum. At any moment when requircd he would leave his own work to go to the study of any artist who wanted his counsel or opinion, which he gave with such cordiality, as never to wound their professional pride, but, on the contrary, as always to afford them aid and encouragement. To those who express surprise, that not a single pupil of Canova can be absolutely cited, it may be answered that, if they will compare the state of his art at the era of his earliest productions, with that of the present day, it will appear most convincingly that the effect of the examples which he has afforded to all Europe in his own works, has been infinitely greater than what could have been derived from a few precepts inculcated in his private study.

He was very solicitous to instruct and adorn his mind in every respect that could tend to the perfect education of an artist; he read himself, but more often caused to be read to him, while at work, the classical Grecian, Roman, and Italian writers, particularly Polybius and Tacitus, whom he considered most luminous and characteristical of the times which they so masterly describe. His own style in writing was always simple and ingenuous, although his letters serve to shew the progressive correctness of his language, so that the latter part of them without losing their original force and freedom, and uncorrupted,

on the other hand, by the obscure affectation of modern style, are more elegantly written than those of an earlier date. He never wrote with a view of publishing on the subject of his art, although it appears from one of his letters that he had thoughts of doing it, limitedly however and with much reserve; in a letter to a friend dated 1812, he says, " you will be surprised when I tell you that I have never written a single line on the subject of my art: I have, however, always had an intention, but have not yet found the moment for carrying it into effect; perhaps at some future time I may. I have determined, however, to give observations on my own works, extending them, perhaps, to the general subject of sculpture and its few elements; but not to make a work of it, which I could never be so silly as to think of, but shall confine myself to the mere exposition of the principles on which I have pursued my labours, and nothing more." When circumstances necessarily required it, he committed to paper some valuable remarks, not however in the language of dictation, although his authority was always willingly submitted to. His clear, measured, and precise opinions were, however, sometimes secretly noted by his friends; some of these will be made public by his memorialist, who even while he was living, had thoughts of publishing them in the disguised character of an old manuscript lately discovered in the archives of the academy of St. Luca; for in this form only would he consent to have his opinions, so ingeniously obtained, communicated to the world.

His susceptibility and active fancy gave great quickness and energy to his invention, prompting

his imagination spontaneously, and without effort, to reach the great and excellent in his designs. He usually threw his first thoughts on paper in a few slight outlines, which he often varied and retouched, and then sketched in clay or wax, in small dimensions: with this he studied the composition of his subject, which was afterward transferred to the full sized model, and perfected with all the resources of his genius and art. His tranquillity was never in the slightest degree disturbed by jealousy of the success of others, but on the contrary he always spoke of his rivals and of artists of merit with the utmost candour and good will. It was never his wish to be adopted as a model, or to have direct imitators, observing, that the great masters, by whom he had been guided, were equally accessible to all, being no others than nature and antiquity. He was, however, obliged to allow that at the era of his first arrival at Rome, these two sources of instruction had been neglected, and that he had been the first to apply the means of improvement which they afforded; but it was with the utmost caution and modesty that he noticed this fact, to avoid wounding the pride of others, who were not very willing to do justice to his services, and attributed much to themselves which was justly his due.

Criticism likewise never produced any irritation in him; if false and violent, he wholly disregarded it; if just and modest, he adopted the means of improvement which it furnished, always, however, shewing great deference for enlightened advice. When some of his friends wished to reply to a certain Sig. Fernow, who had published a pamphlet against him in German,

from which extracts had been made into the Encyclopædean Journal of Naples, he earnestly dissuaded them from it, saying, that it was for him to answer it, but only with his chisel and by an improvement in his works; but he would listen with attention to observations on his works, even by the most uninstructed, from which, as Virgil could extract thoughts from the verses of Ennius, he sometimes obtained some useful suggestions, by which he has in some cases been led to retouch his work; as in the instance of his Perseus, and the group of Venus and Adonis, which, in its way from Naples to Geneva, was delayed for some time in the study of the artist, and received some very valuable improvements twentyseven years after its completion. Undisturbed by censure, he was on the other hand little elated by praise, however high or exaggerated. The calmness and modesty of his character, which few have ever possessed in an equal degree, rendering him equally unmoved by eulogy and censure. He has been frequently seen to smile, when his panegyrists, chiefly with the object of displaying themselves, have put their ingenuity to the torture to discover remote allusions, or excessive subtlety and refinement in his designs, and was used to say, that truly he had never thought of any such thing; but had only endeavoured to express in the most simple and natural manner, those plain and natural thoughts which had arisen in his mind, on the contemplation of his subject.

More than once during his life, he experienced the passion of love, in a degree corresponding to the susceptibility and ardour of his nature, and has been heard to say, that he was subject to its influence at a very early age. On two occasions he was very near to entering into the marriage state, but was, perhaps, deterred by the apprehension of its diverting him from his devotion to his art, which was always his master and engrossing passion: his heart was, however, never entangled by low attachments, but was the seat only of the noblest and most elevated sentiments. Friendship was held by him in peculiar veneration; and to the last hour, his soul was youthful in feelings, and susceptible of the deepest and tenderest affections.

It was the good fortune of Canova to escape unhurt the effects of the political events which then agitated Europe, and to be able to devote himself, undisturbedly, to his art. Pallas seems to have guarded him like Ulysses, by spreading around him a divine atmosphere, which shielded off the disasters, privations, and misfortunes of that era. Ambition, and the desire of military glory, characterised the great men of that period, and particularly the great conqueror; calling for monuments to record their actions to posterity, which object Canova was deemed most able to fulfil: thus he was summoned to Paris in 1802, to model the portrait of Napoleon, from which he first executed a colossal statue in marble, and then in bronze; the first by the sport of inconstant fortune, now being on the banks of the Thames; the latter in the academy at Milan, until a proper site be found for this noble work of art. Highly interesting matter will be supplied to the future historian of Canova, by the conversations which Buonaparte, who so much valued the frankness and simplicity of men of genius, held with him on this occasion, in which plain and undisguised truths, such as are rarely heard in rooms of state, were fearlessly uttered by the ingenuous artist. The vigilance of his brother, who always accompanied him in his journeys, was highly serviceable, in collecting and noting at the time the interesting dialogues which took place on this occasion; and also when Canova was again called to Paris in 1810, to model a portrait of the Empress Maria Louisa, whom he represented in a sitting statue, with the attributes of the Goddess Concordia, now in the palace at Parma.

In the interval of these journeys to France, he made a second visit to Vienna, for the purpose of placing the sepulchre of the Archduchess Christina in the church of the Augustines in that city. This composition added greatly to his reputation there, and excited so strong a desire in the imperial court to possess his works, that he was induced to send his magnificent group of Theseus destroying a Centaur to Vienna, rather than to Milan, for which city it was originally The Emperor Francis caused a temple, in intended. the style of the purest Greek models, to be erected in the imperial gardens for its reception, and nothing was wanting to the completion of the design but the presence of Canova, to direct the placing of the group, when his death intervened.

The fascinating influence which the grace and beauty of his female figures exercise on the senses, and the emotion produced by their tender and voluptuous expression, has caused him to be called, by many, the Sculptor of Venus and the Graces; but it will not surely be said by posterity, that the

statues of the three pontiffs, the colossal groups of Hercules and Lichas, and of Theseus and the Centaur, the Pugilists, Hector and Ajax, Washington, the colossal statue of Napoleon, the group of the Piety, or the Equestrian Monuments of Naples, were imagined in the gardens of Cythera. On these posterity will decide, whether or no Canova possessed that profound acquaintance with nature and anatomy which is indispensible, to the perfection of works of this description. It certainly will be allowed that his science is not applied to a pompous display of himself, as it is one of the peculiar merits of this artist, that he is always modestly concealed behind his works, aiming at justness of expression rather than an ostentatious display of his science in exaggerated forms; his works were therefore addressed to his posterity, to whose unbiassed judgment and discernment he appealed for his fame. It is also true, that he attained to a high degree of excellence in his female figures, and if a rigorous criticism should, in some instances, impute to them a somewhat studied attitude—an expression approaching to affectation, or redundant and elaborate attire, it may be observed, that these objections principally apply to figures represented in dancing postures, or in motions to which simplicity or dignity would be wholly unsuitable. These sprightly designs, which he used to call his recreations,* have been engraved with a dark ground, similarly to the Herculaneum subjects, and seem to combine all the most pleasing forms and attitudes of the dance; in the plates they are called Danzatrici Baccanti Muse, &c. and in them we may

^{*} Ozii suoi.

frequently trace out the first ideas of some of his more finished works.

The opponents of Canova have also charged him with not having confined himself to the use of the chisel in his marbles, and with having had recourse to factitious means of giving to them an extreme softness and delicacy; which, if it had been the case, would only have been following, in modern times, the example of Nicias, who produced these effects by his washes on the marbles of Praxitiles; but Canova rarely used any other means than that of washing his marbles after they had received their polish with acqua di rota; their soft and delicate surface being produced solely by his consummate chisel, and the diligent use of the file; unlike other sculptors, who think they have no more to do with their work when they have finished the model, and left its execution to the hands of subordinate artists. The exquisite finish of the extremities which his statues so peculiarly possess, may be attributed to the same causes: these are now openly kept as models in the workshops of the most candid and enlightened artists, but still used secretly by others, as if it was derogatory to learn from him who first pointed out the true path of art to modern sculptors.

No artist was ever more exposed to the intoxicating effects of honours and distinctions, exceeding perhaps any instance of the kind in the history of the arts; but although decorated with the equestrian orders of many great sovereigns, decreed noble in several states, dignified by titles, enriched by pensions, honoured by important charges and functions, received with distinction at all courts, desired in all societies,

and associated with all the principal academies in Europe, he still preserved the simplicity and modesty of his character, and even in the usual acknowledgment of these honours which he was called on to make, he avoided studiously all unnecessary pomp and ostentatious display. His disposition was naturally highly benevolent; all his pensions and gains were devoted to useful and charitable purposes, such as the foundation of the Roman academy of Archaiology; in pensions for the support of young pupils in the arts; to the procuring of books for the academy of St. Luca; aiding the funds of the academy de' Lincei; in annual premiums to young artists who distinguished themselves; in the support of decayed artists and their orphan and destitute families;—these beneficent acts were done with the utmost nobleness, delicacy, and secrecy; and even some interference was often required to prevent him from embarrassing his finances by a too active generosity. Rome, in 1811, felt more particularly the worth of Canova when deprived of its sovereign, deserted by foreigners, empty and impoverished, it saw the votaries of Pallas and the Muses pining in their workshops, without the means of support, and even perishing for want; history will recount the succours afforded by Canova on this occasion; with what judicious and noble means he supplied the wants of the youths dependant on the arts; employing also numerous artists in making drawings and highly finished engravings of his works, and establishing an extensive engraver's press, an example which was afterward followed, but with a different object, by many others.

One of the memorable circumstances in the life of

Canova is the last journey he made to Paris, when bearing the special mission of the Holy See, he mingled with the great personages there assembled, and reclaimed the spoils which the triumphs of the Gallic eagle had swept from the Campidoglio and the Vatican; the zeal and auxious exertions are indiscribable which this worthy son of Italy used to execute the charge of his master, and to regain for his country her violated treasures; the firmness with which he urged the claims of Rome, and his unwearied efforts to unite in her favour the various interests and opinions, will afford an interesting subject to the future historian of this illustrious man. His re-entrance into Rome was a real triumph; again the Transfiguration heard hymns in honour of the memory of Rafaello, and the Apollo and Laocoon recalled to Rome, now weak and fallen, the memory of those joyous days, when amidst the triumphal pomp of a Titus, or an Emilius, the spoils of conquered nations entered her walls.

It was in these circumstances that Canova, deeply affected by the great events of the times, so little to have been foreseen by human thought, conceived the design of perpetuating the memory of the happy return of the Pontiff to his church; and he accordingly, that same year, produced the model of a grand colossal figure of Religion, of the height of thirty palms, which he proposed to execute in marble at his own expence, and make an offering of to the Christian world. By the completion of this design, the present age would have possessed a wonder of art and sublimity to which it has never yet seen any thing equal; emanating too solely and spontaneously

from the mind of the artist, wholly uninstigated and unaided by extraneous means: all Europe looked forward to see it adding to the glory of the Vatican, or adorning the magnificent space of the Pantheon. Already the model was completed, the marble disposed, and the chisel of the sculptor suspended, until the signal of authority should be given, by pointing out the place appointed for its reception. It will be for history to explain the causes of the frustration of this devout and magnanimous design, and perhaps it may be found needful to draw a veil over the motives to which it may be traced; posterity will with difficulty believe, that no place could be found at Rome for the reception of the sacred image of Religion.—It is, however, certain, that the model remained for many years the object of public admiration, a masterly engraving being made from it with the following inscription: - (Pro felici reditu Pii VII. Pontificis Maximi, Religionis formam sua impensa in marmore exculpendam Antonius Canova libens fecit et dedicavit,) and that, finally, it was worked in marble a little above the natural size, by the order of Lord Brownlow; and the emblem of Catholicism was thus rejected from the Tiber, and found refuge on the banks of the Thames.

This extraordinary circumstance did not, however, depress the mind of Canova, who, actuated by the deepest religious feelings, had already formed the design of consecrating his fortune and the last efforts of his genius to memorize a period in which the inscrutable decrees of providence had been so remarkably displayed: and that the statue which he had consecrated to this pious purpose might not be pro-

faned by any less sacred use, he resolved on the raising of a temple for its reception in his native place, to be enriched with the productions of his chisel; by which also he would open a perpetual source of prosperity for his native village in the concourse of workmen, the visits of strangers, and the expenditure of his entire fortune. The first stone of this sumptuous edifice was accordingly laid in July, 1819, amidst an immense concourse of people, with all the solemnities of Religion, and the deep emotions of the assembly; but he had not foreseen that this design would require an infinitely greater expenditure than that of the colossal statue; to supply which, it became necessary for him to renew his labours, and to undertake fresh commissions; accordingly, he set about new statues, groups, and monuments, working incessantly, and with all the ardour of his youthful application; his mind always intent on the great object of his pious wishes; it is not, therefore, improbable that this greatly encreased exertion, and the mental excitation consequent on it, tended to accelerate the termination of his existence.

Even at this stage of the life of this great artist, the connoisseur may find new advances towards excellence in his works, which is obviously to be attributed to the opportunity which his voyage to England afforded him of contemplating, for the first time, the marbles of the Parthenon in the British Museum. The lofty terms in which he spoke of them on his return, the profit he derived from them, and the devoted admiration which he ever after entertained for them, are subjects of great and various interests; he himself acknowledged that a visible improvement, and the highest efforts of his chisel

were to be found in the works which he executed subsequently to his visit to London.

In the latter part of 1821, he took a journey to Possagno to inspect the progress of the work there, and made many important alterations in his first designs, necessary in the adaptation of an edifice evidently formed on the united recollections of the Parthenon and the Pantheon, to the purposes of a Christian church. On his return to Rome he modelled the group of the Piety, one of the principal works which remains to be executed in marble, to the great regret of all capable of feeling the beautiful and grand in art; the first conceptions of this group were most felicitous, and the composition most rapid, suffering neither pause or amendment in its progress, although from the profound science it involves, the artist, had evidently to overcome great difficulties in the expression of his ideas; when completed, however, it formed the wonder of all Rome, and of the strangers then in that city. In the course of the winter, he modelled a monument for the Marquiss Berio, of Naples; also seven designs for the Metopes of the church at Possagno; the subjects taken from sacred history; and a colossal bust, the portrait of an intimate friend; with the advance of spring, he completed, with a delightful finish, the group of Mars and Venus for his Britannic Majesty, and also completed the recumbent statues of the Magdalen, and the Endymion, which he had executed for two distinguished English Noblemen. Besides these important objects, he proceeded, at every leisure moment, with other works which he had on hand. The Sleeping Nymph, Dirce Nurse of Bacchus, a repetition of the Nymph awakened at the sound of a Lyre, a Danzatrice, and various busts and other minor works.

In the month of May, he went to Naples, to inspect the wax of his second colossal horse, preparatory to the fusion of the work, and returned to Rome, with a tendency to disorder in his stomach, which was always badly affected by that climate; having recovered himself in some degree, and completed the works above-mentioned, he left that city, for the last time, in September, for Possagno, hoping to derive benefit from the journey, and from his native air, and arrived at that village on the 17th of the same month; but, as was usual with him, by a too hurried journey, and while he was still unable to bear the heat of the weather, which was, in that year, unusually great throughout Italy; indeed, he was very ill on his arrival, but continued there until the 3rd October, without taking to his bed, expecting relief from his native air and the waters of Recoaro, from which he had, on former occasions, derived benefit; all was, however, unavailing. On the 4th he arrived at Venice, intending to stay there for two or three days, having written as follows in the last letter that was signed by his hand:-- "My health goes on as usual, or is perhaps rather worse than it was; for a few days I thought it getting better, but I was disappointed; perhaps the journey to Rome may restore me; I would fain embrace you once again." No sooner had he taken up his abode, as he was accustomed, under the friendly roof of the Casa Francesconi, which he preferred to the many splendid mansions which were emulously opened to him, than he took to his bed.

The stomach failing in the performance of its functions, encreased his uneasiness; nor could medical aid at all abate a constant hiccough which gave him the greatest distress; his pulse, however, remained unaltered, and his head unaffected to his last moments. The friends whom he saw around him endeavoured, but ineffectually, to conceal the alarm and distress by which they were agitated. He heard with perfect calmness the announcement of the necessity of arranging his worldly concerns, and confirmed the disposition which he had made of his affairs many years before at Rome, but now made his property chargeable with the expenditure required for the completion of the church at Possagno; appointing his step-brother sole executor and heir, but who, in reality, became rather the distributor of his wealth, than the heir to it. He also expressed great satisfaction at having completed all the works for which he had been paid in anticipation.

Continuing for several days to get gradually worse, he performed the last offices of religion, and resigned himself to die with the utmost constancy and serenity, uttering only short sentences to his attendants, and of a pious nature: to those who administered to him the last soothing remedies, he said with his usual kindness of manner, "Yet give it me, that so I may remain a little longer with you." Approaching nearer to his end, he said to those who moistened his dying lips, "Buono buonissimo ma—èinutile;*" hislast words were, "Anima bella e pura:†" these he uttered several times just before he expired, and if his spirit was not wandering at that moment, it may be said, that he

^{*} Good, very good—but, it is in vain.
+ Pure and lovely spirit.

died without any mental aberration. He spoke no more, but his visage became, and continued for some time, highly radiant and expressive, as if his mind was absorbed in some sublime conception; creating powerful and unusual emotions in all around him: thus he must have looked when imagining that venerable figure of the pontiff, who is represented in the attitude of prayer in the Vatican. His death was wholly unattended by the agonies which make a death-bed so distressing; nor did even a single sigh or convulsion announce his dying moment. This took place on the morning of the 13th of October, having then nearly completed the 65th year of his age.

On the opening of the body, it was found that his death had been caused by a paralysis of the stomach, promoted by the schirrous state of the pylorus, by which the passage of food into the intestines was impeded.

The loss of Canova occasioned the deepest affliction throughout the city of Venice; the power which regulates human destinies having conducted him to the tomb in that country where he had first drawn breath. The patriarch himself would perform the funereal rites, and the academic body, who were desirous of supporting his bier, conducted the coffin of their revered brother and master to the church, and thence to the hall of the academy, followed by so numerous a train, that that vast apartment was insufficient to contain them. The walls of the hall were hung with engraved copies of the works of Canova, so numerous that they appeared the labours of a whole race of artists, rather than of a single mind and hand. The president of the academy,

an affectionate friend of the deceased, delivered the oration, exciting in the minds of the assembly the same deep emotions by which he was himself affected. The only torch which burnt beside the bier, stood on that ancient bronze, which had for so many centuries been used to receive the votes of the patricians, in the hall of the great council, and was deemed a suitable candelabra for the last offices paid to the latter glories of the Venetian state.

Immediately after the ceremony, the body was removed to Possagno, where an honourable tomb will be raised to his memory, in the new church The funereal rites were now nearly completed. performed on the 25th of October, and a discourse delivered by a distinguished prelate, to so large a concourse of the inhabitants of that district, that it was found necessary to address them under the open sky. Throughout Italy, the deepest affliction prevailed on this event; Rome, who lost by his death the restorer of her modern greatness, decreed to him the honour of a statue, proclaimed him perpetual president of her chief academy, and ordered for him a funeral in the church of the Holy Apostles, of such magnificence, that all the tributary arts were occupied for many months in the preparation of it. The pope contributing largely to the expense, and the whole of the magistracy, together with the representatives of the first powers in Europe paying respect to it by their presence: likewise Florence, Trevigi, Udine, and Lodi gave each her public demonstrations of grief on this occasion; but none with more zealous promptitude than the Venetian artists, the kind friends and fellowacademicians of Canova. Immediately on his death, they voted to his memory the grandest and most distinguished monument that could be devised; and not to limit the honour of this design to Venice alone, or even to Italy, the subscription was thrown open to all Europe, to whom his fame might be deemed to belong; whereupon the powers then assembled at Verona, following the example of our august Emperor, severally evinced their desire of promoting this object by munificent contributions; as the more distant sovereigns also did, on the announcement of the project. So rapid and considerable was the subscription, that long before the ensuing spring, they were in condition to begin the work.

A monument to the memory of Tiziano had been designed by Canova, in the year 1792, which it was intended to raise in the church de' Frari, in Venice; but the design, which was to have been effected by subscription, failed by the death of the Chevalier Zulian, its chief promoter, in 1795. The model being thus left on hand, without any prospect of its being carried into execution, Canova adopted the same idea for the monument of the Archduchess Christina, reducing, however, the dimensions, and with considerable alterations in the groups. The opportunity of restoring to its original state and colossal proportions, this beautiful composition, far more suitable to a consummate artist than a pious princess, and, perhaps, even better adapted to a sculptor than to a painter; the absence of all rivalship, in the adoption of the design of him whom all considered as a master, and the means it afforded of employing at the same time

the numerous sculptors, who were anxious to pay homage to the memory of Canova, all concurred to justify the choice of this model formed by the hand of Canova himself.

The academy of Venice, who obtained the heart of Canova, are also now raising a small monument entirely at their own charge, in the hall of their meetings, consisting of an urn of porphyry to contain the precious relic, with ornaments, and an inscription appropriate to the subject and circumstances.

The letters of Canova will furnish to those, who shall collect memorials of him, much that is valuable and interesting: these will be found in the greatest number with the noblemen Guiseppe, Falier, and Lorenzo Giustiniani, the heirs of Antonio Selva the architect; those of the painter Guiseppe Bossi, of Milan; with Count Tiberio Roberti of Bassano, Count Cicognara, at Venice, and M. Quatremère de Quincy, at Paris.

Canova enjoyed the peculiar protection of the patrician Giovanni Falier, as has been already mentioned, of the Chevalier Girolamo Zulian, of the Prince Rezzonico, and of the Marchioness Gentili, one of the most accomplished women of Rome, at the time of his arrival there. The number of persons connected with him, by the ties of friendship, was also very considerable; but if the degree in which it was enjoyed were to be determined by particular demonstrations of regard, the Chevalier Bossi and Count Cicognara, whose busts, while living, he sculptured in colossal size, and with whom he maintained an uninterrupted correspondence, may, perhaps, claim

a distinction in this respect. The following may also be mentioned as his attached friends: Gio. Antonio Selva; the sculptor, Antonio D'Esté, the constant companion of his study; the excellent Chevr. Gio. Gherardo de Rossi: that able writer, and his warm admirer, Pietro Giordani; and the secretary of the academy of St. Luca, the Abbate Melchior Missirini, with whom he was for many years united by a strict similarity of tastes and pursuits; and the Chevalier Tambroni; but Gavin Hamilton, the Scotch painter, was the first at Rome who gained the youthful attachment of Canova, and he was never satisfied with speaking in terms of grateful remembrance of the kind encouragement and counsel which this worthy man afforded him in the difficulties of his early career. M. Quatremère de Quincy, Lord Cawdor, and Sir William Hamilton, also possessed his friendship in a peculiar degree, and gave, on many occasions, unequivocal proofs of an equal esteem; but the most intimate, cordial, and inseparable of all his friends was his step-brother, the Abbate Sartori Canova, who, from the year 1800, resided entirely with him, and became the participator in his most secret and individual concerns; and to whose sole and sacred friendship he confided at his death the execution of his most cherished designs: but it would not be possible, without exceeding the limits prescribed to this memoir, to mention the many distinguished and enlightened persons who experienced from Canova the most ready intimacy and kindness. To him who shall undertake a more comprehensive and detailed account, these anecdotes will furnish much that is interesting, as well to his contemporaries, as to posterity.

The high esteem in which Canova, while living, was held throughout Europe, is one of the most honourable records of art, and of requited genius; for, not only was he an object of admiration to Italy, and his own countrymen, but had in France also for his admirers, all those persons most distinguished for taste and impartiality of judgment; the French having been unjustly charged with holding his talents in light estimation, as is evident from the flattering notice he received from their learned bodies, the study and imitation of his works, the high price at which they were sold there, and the public expression of regret at his decease: nor was their respect for him at all diminished by the zealous activity which he shewed in recovering from them the precious spoils of his country. In England he was held in equal, or even greater estimation, and received, during the short visit he paid to that country after his last journey to Paris, the most generous and distinguished notice and attention.

The questions most commonly and earnestly put are, if Canova has reached in sculpture the excellence of ancient Greece, in what points the comparison may be made, and by what means he surpassed the sculptors of the age of Julius and of Leo. Contemporary jealousy will not allow of his title to this elevation; but this opinion will not greatly surprise those who are intimately acquainted with living artists, while to an unbiassed posterity may be confided the rank that he will permanently hold in the arts.

The sculptors of the fifteenth century, when the arts were subsidiary to religion, which was the chief pro-

moter of their revival in Europe, reached a high degree of excellency, so far as regards expression, and the simplicity and devotional air proper to subjects of piety: the works of that period are accordingly characterised by a timid expression of religious sentiments and emotions, and confined to a mere imitation of nature. By degrees the ambition began to prevail of surprising the beholder, and of displaying the artist at the sacrifice of truth of effect. The successive sculptors of the sixteenth century proceeded to operate with greater boldness, and throwing off what they deemed the servile yoke of the imitation of nature, but without substituting a beau ideal, founded on the antique, with the view of attaining to greater originality, proceeded from one license to another, until all rules were abandoned; while destitute of the force and science of Bonarroti, they possessed no qualities to redeem the faults which he, as a sculptor, had rendered the idols of his age. A superiority over the masters of both these periods will then be readily accorded to Canova, who, with nothing of hardness or timidity, in his imitation of nature, or of falseness and tendency to error in his beau ideal, formed a style, by the happy and inseparable union of these two kinds of imitation, which constitutes the true path to perfection; and if Michael Angelo has left a mighty name behind him, in works of the pencil, and of architecture, it is not necessary that posterity should overrate the paintings of Canova, or the edifice he raised at Possagno, to preserve the balance between them, while his superiority in sculpture, more than supplies any deficiency in respect to the other two branches of art.

The degree in which Canova approximated to the excellency of Grecian art, is shewn in his masterly manner of treating those bold and novel conceptions, for which neither antiquity or the age of Leo had afforded him any precedent, and in which he stood entirely alone and original. These possess a justness and propriety of style, a freedom from all extravagancy, while the character and attributes peculiar to each work are never confounded together. In all his various productions, we always can admire a scrupulous perfection, in the extremities, a charming sweetness of contour, and a peculiar grace, but without affectation, in the motion of the neck, giving a fine expression to the head, and graceful disposition of the shoulders: but his marbles are above all distinguished by the exquisite representation of the flesh and appearances of the skin; without, however, degenerating into a minute and servile imitation: he seems to have proceeded by first impressing on his statues all the divinity of his beau ideal, and afterward to recal them, if it may be so expressed, to humanity, by scattering here and there those traces of reality, which his attentive observation of the natural supplied; these masterly strokes raised his figures into life, all the softness and delicacy of which were added by his last fine touches.

Sensibility and quick perception will fully suffice, without critical knowledge of art, to feel all the fineness and justness of his expression. The fury of Hercules hurling Lichas into the sea; the noble and heroic air of Theseus, in the act of slaying the Centaur; the various characters of Hector and Ajax;

the pious figure of Clement XIII.; the deep affliction in the family group, on the tomb of the Countess D'Haro; the lofty courage of Creugas; the fell expression of that of Damoxenus; the mild dignity of Washington; the deeply empassioned group of the Piety; without mentioning his subjects of beauty and grace, so expressive of voluptuous, but at the same time pure and innocent emotions; these alone will be sufficient to sustain the character of Canova, in any trial or comparisons that may be made. Although he may not have reached the excellency of the Grecian masters, particularly in those few instances in which some degree of imitation of their works is observable, yet it may be affirmed, that he affords the only example hitherto, of such an attempt being made with any degree of success. This is attested by his statues of Perseus, and of the mother of Napoleon, which remind us of the Apollo and the Agrippina, without suffering greatly by the comparison.

The two colossal statues of Hector and Ajax, which were in his study at the time of his decease, wanting only some slight alterations, and the last polish, are yet almost unknown to the world, but will contribute to the reputation of the sculptor, equally with the devotional figure of Clement XIII., the Blind Man in the Monument of the Archduchess Christina, the Magdalen, the Pugilists, Hebe, Polymnia, and the group of the Piety, works for which no known models are furnished by antiquity.

The contents of his study will shortly afford a highly interesting and instructive treat to the artist and the amateur. These consist of his studies from life, of

every variety of character, sex, and age; of experiments of every kind of drapery from life, and models; and his original thoughts on paper, and in clay and wax models of various dimensions.

In a more enlarged biography of Canova, it might have been expected to find his defects, as an artist, more precisely pointed out; defects which he himself ingenuously confessed; but from the narrow scale on which it has been here attempted to give a faithful sketch of the life of this illustrious man, it has not been thought requisite to dwell on faults, inconsiderable in themselves, and wholly lost, in a general view, in the splendour of his excellencies.



ANTONIO CANOVA.

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EURYDICE AND ORPHEUS.

(STATUES IN SOFT STONE.)

CANOVA, while a boy, and under his paternal roof at Possagno, evinced his genius for the arts by sculpturing baskets of fruit, the bust of a friend or relation, or modelling a lion in miniature: but his manner of doing these trifles, like the infant sports of Hercules, gave promise of what was effected in the maturity of his powers. While still a youth he read with great delight the beautiful fictions of Grecian Mythology; among which the pathetic story of Orpheus and Eurydice powerfully awakened his sensibility, and prompted him to attempt a representation of that subject. He accordingly modelled and executed the statue of Eurydice, in his sixteenth year, and that of Orpheus about two years after, for the Venetian patrician Giovanni Falier, a name occurring so frequently and honourably in the history of Canova; and they are at present the valuable and interesting ornaments of the villa Falier near Asolo. statues he worked in soft stone, while yet only aided by that vivid and profound sense of beauty and truth, with which nature had so largely endowed him; and

EURYDICE AND ORPHEUS.

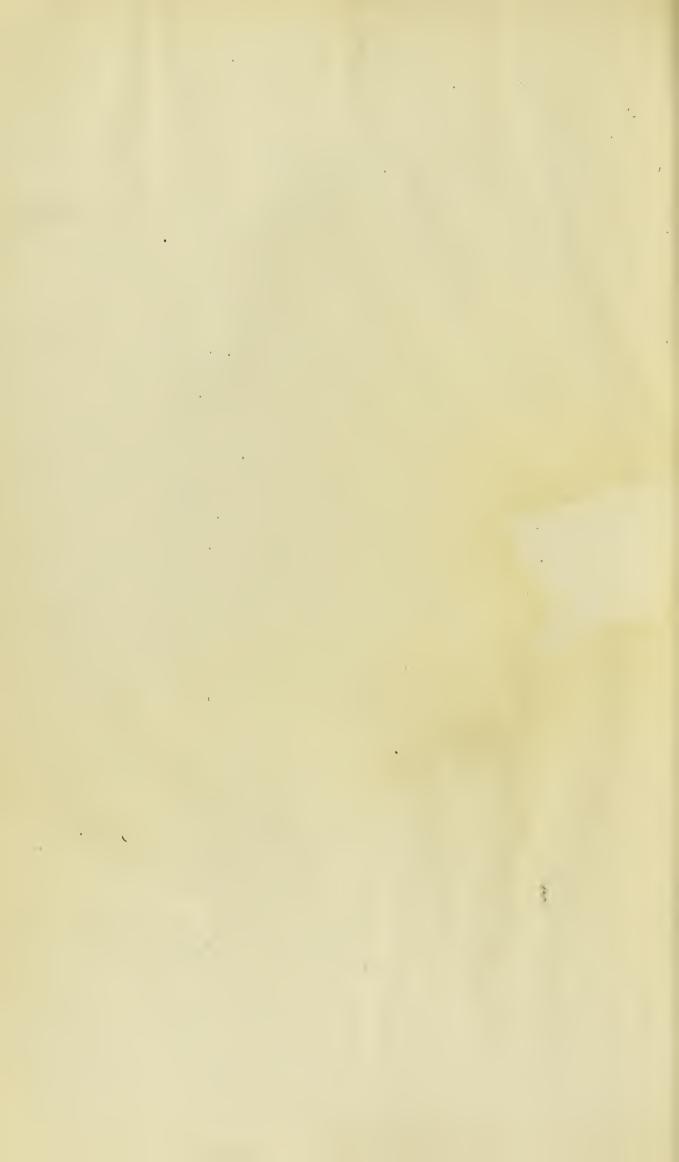
before his genius had been excited and developed, by the contemplation of the great models of antiquity.

The figure of Eurydice is powerfully expressive of the terror with which she is seized at this fatal moment: she raises her arm as if imploring succour, but her countenance is marked with a full consciousness of her fate, and with the most hopeless grief; her hair falling wildly over her shoulders adds to the distraction of her The effort is well expressed by which she endeavours to advance, while she is irresistably drawn backwards by a hand reaching out of the smoke and This figure is evidently a youthful effort, darkness. but is valuable from its expression, the deep sentiments it involves, and the hopes which it gave of The Orpheus, which so soon future excellence. succeeded it, shews the rapid progress of the young sculptor: the design and finish of the limbs are better, and the countenance has a nobler expression. It furnishes proof that the important quality of expression, by which the works of Canova were afterward so highly distinguished, was the native and spontaneous growth of his own mind and deep feelings, and needed no foreign aid to call it into being. The attitude of Orpheus, his face turned towards Eurydice, shews that he perceives his fault, and is struck with horror at its dire effects. His steps are arrested, but it is evident that he is free, and has escaped the dark abode. Those



ORPHETS

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EURYDICE AND ORPHEUS.

of Eurydice seemed fixed by some superhuman power, and she is plainly doomed to remain there for ever.

* Canova seems to have preserved always a fond remembrance of these youthful productions; when the title of Marquess D'Ischia was conferred on him by Pius XII., he introduced the lyre and the serpent into his coat of arms.

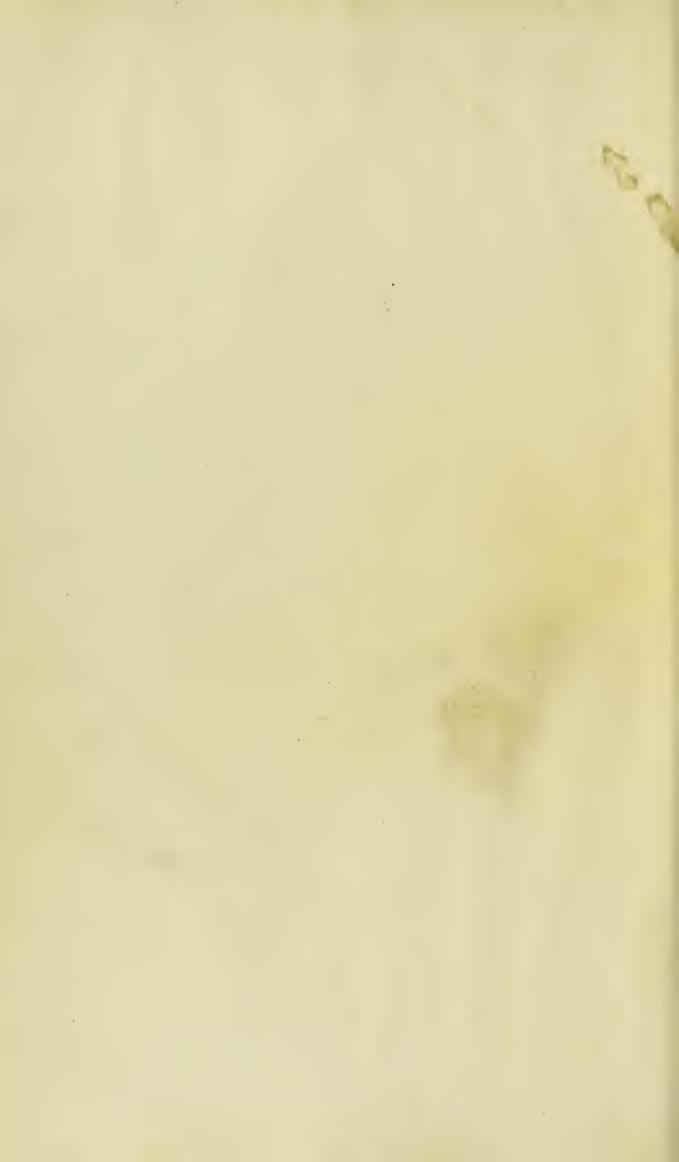




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DAEDALUS AND ICARUS.

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THE MARQUESS POLEST

THE MARQUESS POLENI.

(A STATUE IN SOFT STONE.)

This statue, which is among those which adorn the Prato of Padua, is one of the first productions of Canova's chisel, it therefore possesses the interest that attaches to the early efforts of genius, and as it serves to mark the point from which he advanced to his subsequent perfection.

It is certain, however, that if his own wishes had prevailed we should not have now to notice this work, and his repeated instances prevented its removal to a more secure and distinguished situation, which his affectionate friend L'Abbate D Francisconi, the intelligent librarian of that city would have effected, out of respect to so excellent an artist. It was sculptured so early as 1781 for the Venetian Patrician, Leonardo Venier, as a tribute of affection and gratitude to his great preceptor, the Marquess Poleni, professor of mathematics and astronomy at the University of Padua, and one of the most distinguished men of learning and science of that time.

THE MARQUESS POLENI.

He is represented in a standing posture, and like the ancient statues of Philosophers, naked, except the lower part of his figure which is wrapped in a flowing mantle; his right hand rests upon a machine invented by him for the purpose of scientific experiment, and his left holds a volume entitled "De motu aquæ mixto." Notwithstanding the comparatively unfinished workmanship of this statue, we may observe in it, that Canova even at that early period duly appreciated the quality of expression, and succeeded in giving to the countenance a look of deep reflection and gravity, and of that kindness of nature which so much endeared this great man to his contemporaries.

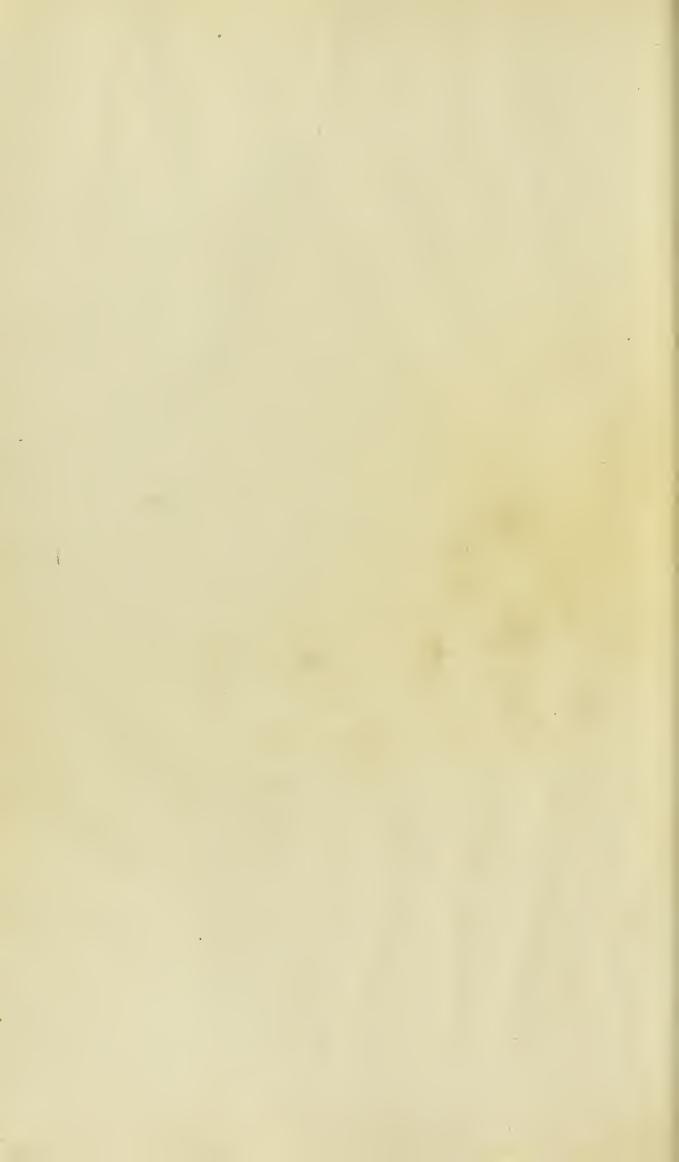


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THESEUS AND THE MINOTAUR.

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MEEKNESS.

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PIETY AND MEEKNESS.

(MODELLED IN PLASTER.)

THESE two figures, allegorical representations of Piety and of Meekness, were modelled so early as the year 1783, and intended for the mausoleum of Clement XIV.; but, as we have already seen in that noble work, the figure of Temperance was substituted for that of Piety, and another figure of Meekness, differing, however, only slightly in respect to dress and posture, now occupies the place for which this was designed; so gentle and prepossessing are their demeanour, that our love and admiration are deeply excited, even without reference to the exalted virtues which they personify. Piety is represented as a female clothed in a long tunic which falls down to her feet; a soft and flowing veil covering her head, and descending in beautiful folds to the ground; there is an expression of sweetness in her looks which accords with the spirit of our religion, and of that retired state of mind so necessary to the conception and enjoyment of its blessings; wholly abstracted from objects of sense, her mind seems to be deeply revolving the thoughts of a more perfect and exalted state of existence.

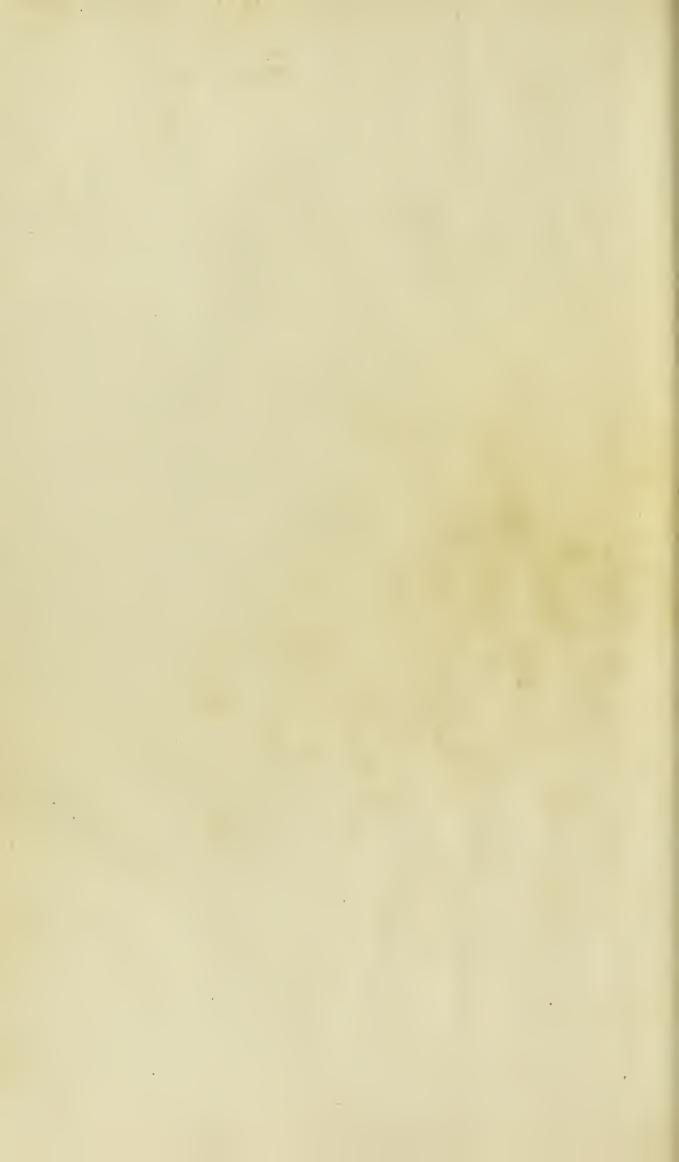
PIETY AND MEEKNESS.

This figure of Meekness, like that in the tomb of Ganganelli, expresses, by her gentle aspect and modest demeanour, the most entire tranquillity of mind, immoveable alike to the cares, the pleasures, and the passions of the world; like the other, too, she is sitting with her hands clasped and resting on her lap; her head is slightly inclining forward, and her hair gathered behind with a graceful simplicity; large and delicate drapery covers her whole person, and descends in rich folds to the ground; her presence diffuses a delightful calm over the beholder, which he would do well to improve by opening his heart for the reception of a virtue so rare, and yet so highly befitting our condition.



PSYCHE.

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10 a Canova Sculpt.

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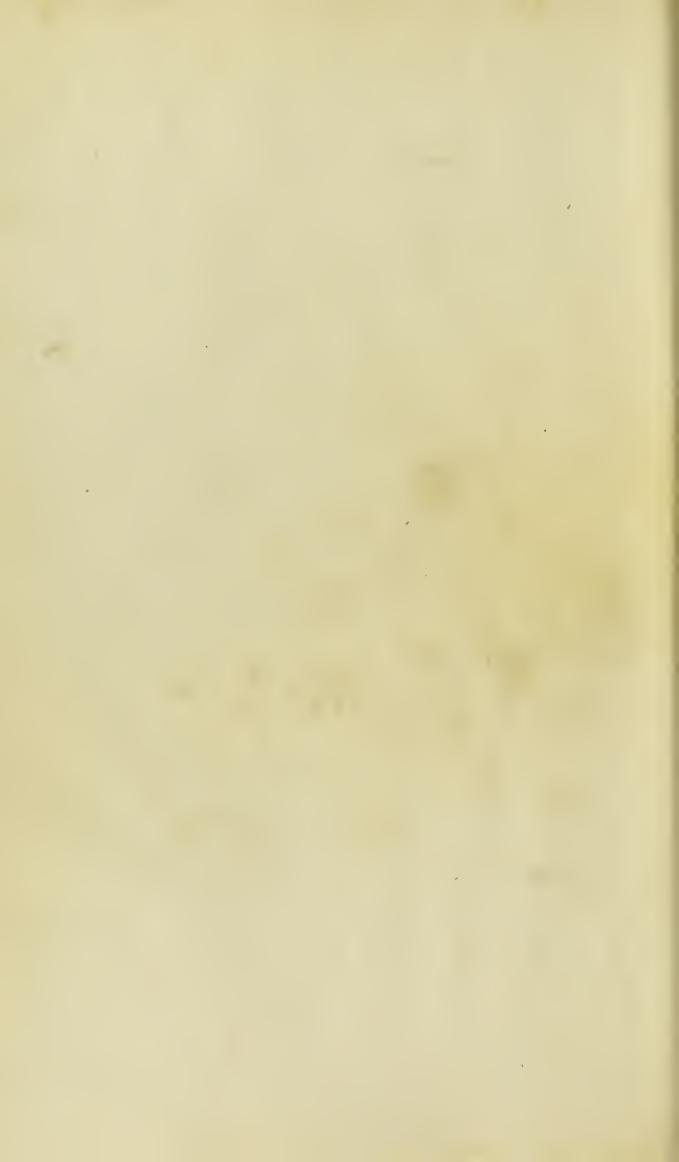
CUPID.

(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

POET, sculptor, or painter, has rarely been found insensible to the fascinations of this young deity, or neglectful in doing homage to him by his peculiar art. In this image of the charming son of Venus, the beauty and purity of design, and that exquisite delicacy of touch which is the highest effort of sculpture, and produces its most enchanting effects, are equally to be admired; his gentle form and limbs possess that early and unformed beauty which is proper to his age; his luxuriant locks are divided into short curls, and fall down behind to the point of his shoulders, giving a soft lustre to his beautiful countenance; and in forming the lips, which are somewhat full and dilated at the extremities, with an expression of great sweetness, the sculptor's hand seems to have been guided by the most empassioned feelings; he is standing in an easy and graceful attitude beside the trunk of a tree, on which he has hung his quiver; in his left hand he holds his irresistible bow, and the other, falling down his side, rests on his hip, with a charming expression of youthful grace; his calm and reposing posture, his bow unstrung, and quiver laid aside, and

above all, the gentle and serene expression of his features, in which no threatened mischief lies, all indicate that the sculptor would here express that tranquil and delightful state when love, viewing with complacency the effect of his last shaft, permits to his votary a delightful interval of constancy and repose.

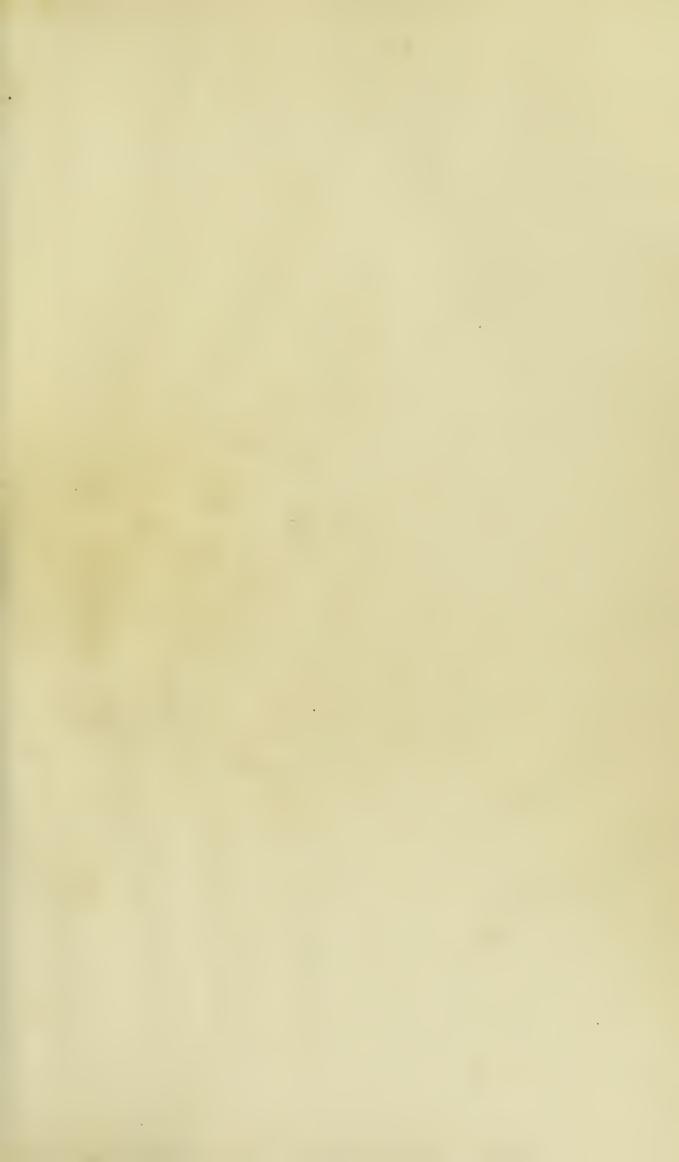






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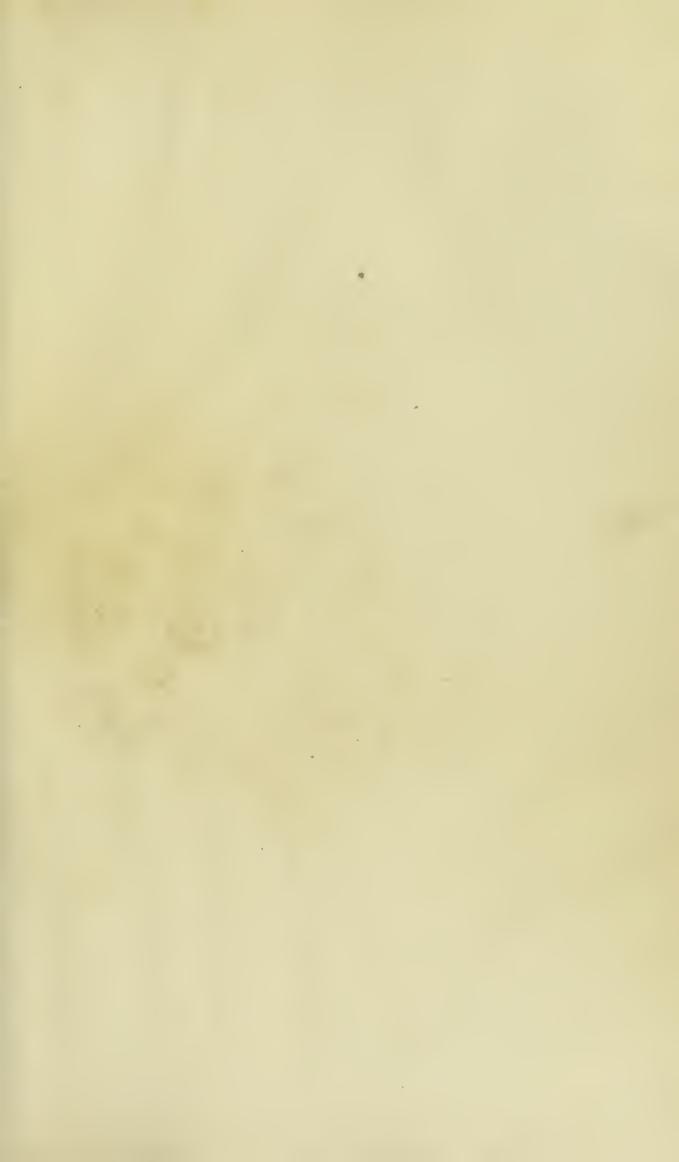
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THE MAGDALEN.

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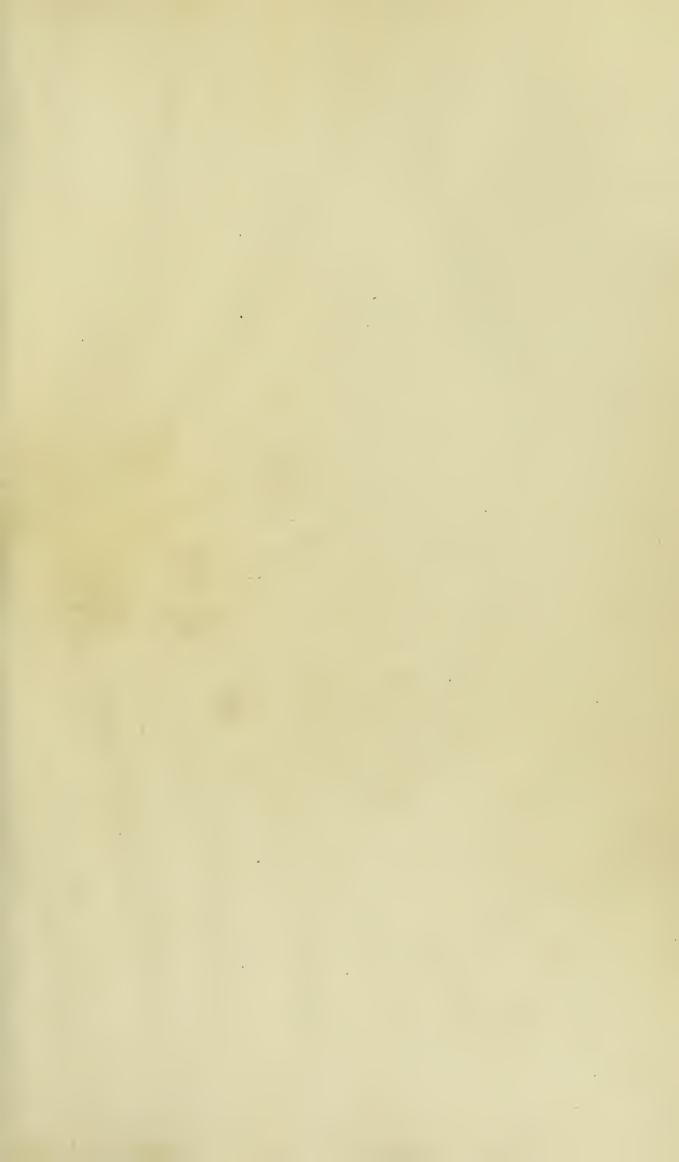
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THE MAGDALEN

Plate 2.

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THE MAGDALEN.

Plate 3

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HEBE.

(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

WE welcome this lovely cup-bearer of Jove, the charming goddess of eternal youth, as if she had just descended from the skies, and feel inclined to address her in the words of our elegant poet, Ippolito Pindimonte:

Whither celestial Hebe do'st thou stray,
Leaving the banquet of eternal Jove;
Deign'st thou to change the radient fields above,
To tread earth's darker and ignobler way?
Immortal sculptor who do'st yet outvie
Italian art, and reachest attic grace,
Life's soft and breathing aspect thou couldst trace;
Here sculptur'd motion cheats the wond'ring eye.
Back from that form on which entranc'd we gaze,
Her vestments seem to flutter in the wind,
Buoyant in many a graceful fold behind;
While Nature's self, whose law the world obeys,
Deceiv'd by mimic art, believes a stone
With motion gifted, swiftly passing on.

The light drapery which clothes her, knotted gracefully round the waist, descends below the knee and leaves uncovered her delicately moulded shoulders and swelling bosom; this soft dress is pressed by the

buoyant wind against her person, and partly reveals to us the beauties of her perfect form. What divine movement! what delicate limbs!—Never, I think, has Canova more felicitously expressed the soft, the warm, the living hue of beauty: an elegant diadem adorns her forehead, partly confining her clustering ringlets, which are gently lifted by the breeze: her attitude is that of pouring out nectar from a golden vase, which she holds raised in the right hand, into a goblet of the same metal in the left; her expression is joyous, but composed, as if intently performing her office in the presence of the assembled deities.

We contemplate this pleasing figure with the same avidity that we look on an enchanting object which is passing away in rapid flight, and feel from this illusion a heightened and more lively pleasure.



Engrave Henry M . e

HEBE





Engraved Charry Mo

CUPUD AND PSYCHE.

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PERSEUS.

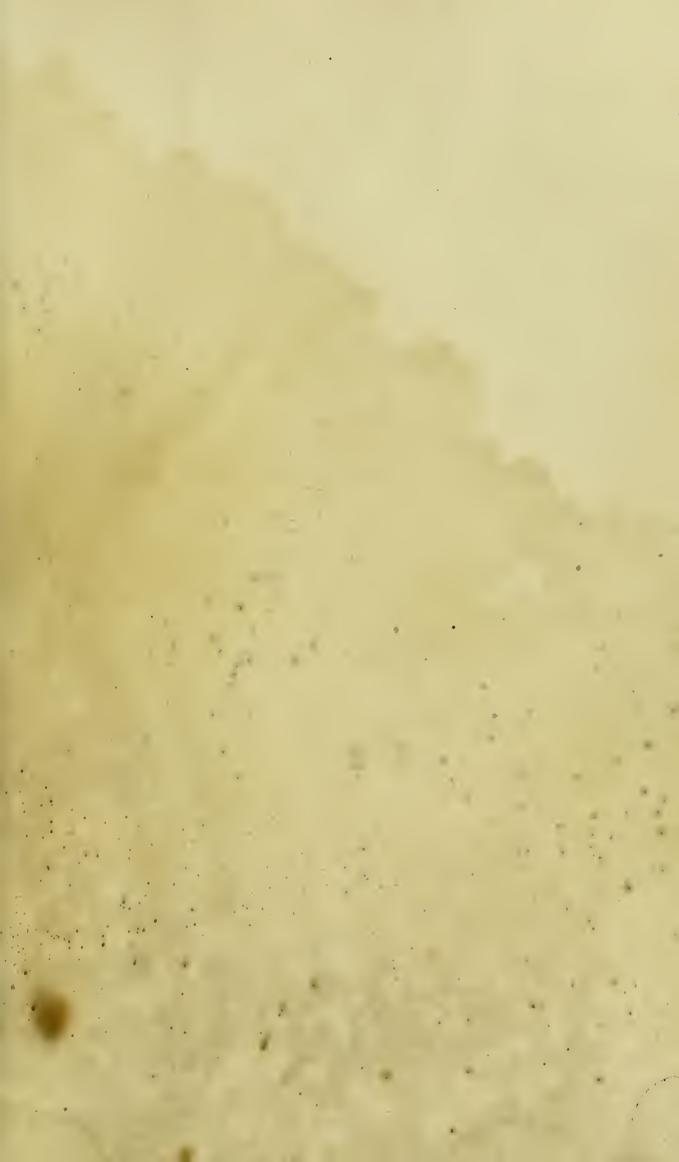
(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

The intrepid son of Jupiter and Danae having engaged to bring to Polydectes, king of Seriphos, the head of Medusa (the only one of the Gorgon sisters who was mortal), was armed by the different deities for the execution of this daring exploit. Medusa was celebrated for her charms, and in particular for the beauty of her hair, but having offended Minerva, part of her tresses were changed into serpents by the vengeful goddess.

Perseus is here seen in the moment of victory; in his left hand is displayed the bleeding head of the Gorgon, which he holds up by the locks, while his right still grasps the deadly falchion; he is naked, except the loose drapery which hanging from his arm trails upon the ground; on his head is a winged helmet, shaped like the Phrygian cap, the gift of Mercury, and sandals clothe his feet. The sculptor has given to this statue a noble and elevated style of beauty, and an air of divinity which raises him above the rank of mere mortals, and finely accords with the descriptions of the heroes and demi-gods of mythology. The

PERSEUS.

countenance of Medusa possesses at once a beauty and a horror which is more than human—which, even in this stone, exercises a sort of fascination over us, and aids the imagination in forming an idea of its original power; her distorted features have not yet wholly lost the power of expression, and seem, even while we gaze on her, to be gradually subsiding to the impassive aspect of death; a wonderful effect of art, in which the excited imagination of the beholder connects the past and the future with the actual state of the object before him.





CRETGAS.



Engraved by Henry Moses

DAMOXENUS.

Published by Sea mus Prowen 'old Strand





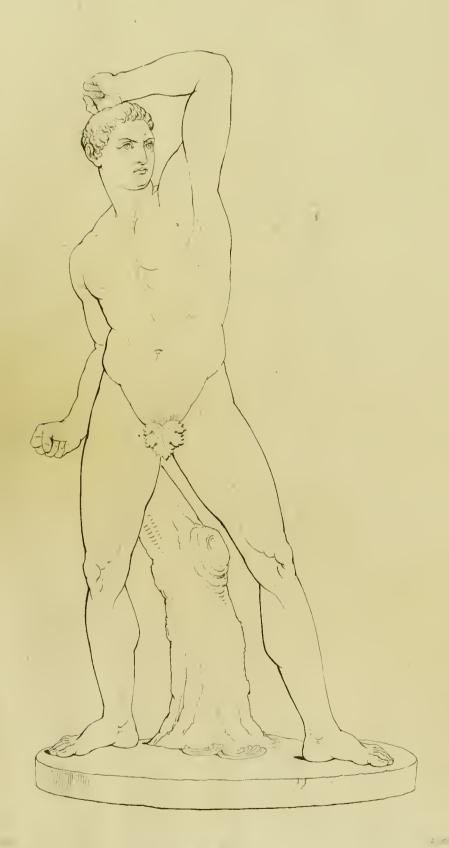


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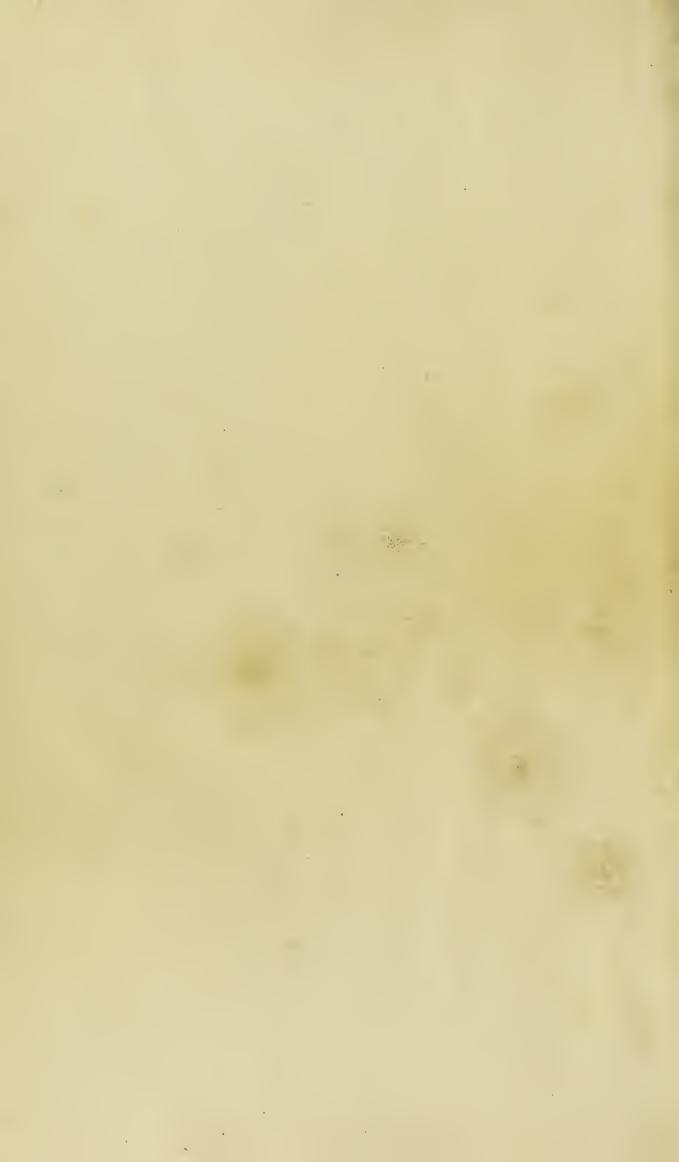
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Plate 2

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CRRIGAS Plate 2.







FERDINARD IV KING OF THE TWO SICILIES.

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FERDINAND IV. KING OF THE TWO SICILIES.

(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

This magnificent colossal statue presents to us, in its majestic countenance, a striking portrait of the monarch who is seated on the throne of the two Sicilies. The costume is in the heroic style: the helmet worn with the vizor raised, is encircled with a laurel wreath, from behind which a lock of hair falls down symmetrically on either side. The cuirass is elegantly adorned with figures, and displays on the breast a winged gorgon head. A splendid mantle hangs on his left shoulder, and passing under his right arm is gathered up on the left side by his hand, and which, together with the arm it wholly conceals, falling down thence in elegant folds to the feet, on which are highly ornamented sandals. His posture is that of one in the act of haranguing, the right hand being extended forward and open. His countenance is grave and composed, but expressive of the mildness of his character, and suggests that some extraordinary circumstances must have led to this warlike representation of the pacific

FERDINAND IV. KING OF THE TWO SICILIES.

monarch. Nothing can exceed the expression of life and nature in the look and attitude of this statue, the elegance and facility of the execution, or the graceful flow of his sumptuous dress; so skilfully is this disposed, that it is not only not productive of confusion to the eye, but exhibits an admirable model of the union of the richest drapery with a fine and accurate developement of form. The general effect of this statue is excellent, and viewed from any point presents to the eye a pleasing and harmonious outline.



E. squared by Henry Mose

HERCULES AND LICHAS.

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Engraved by Henry Moses

MAPOLEON.





PALAMEDES

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MADAME. THE MOTHER OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.



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DANCING GIRL.

Plate 1.

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DANCING CIRL.

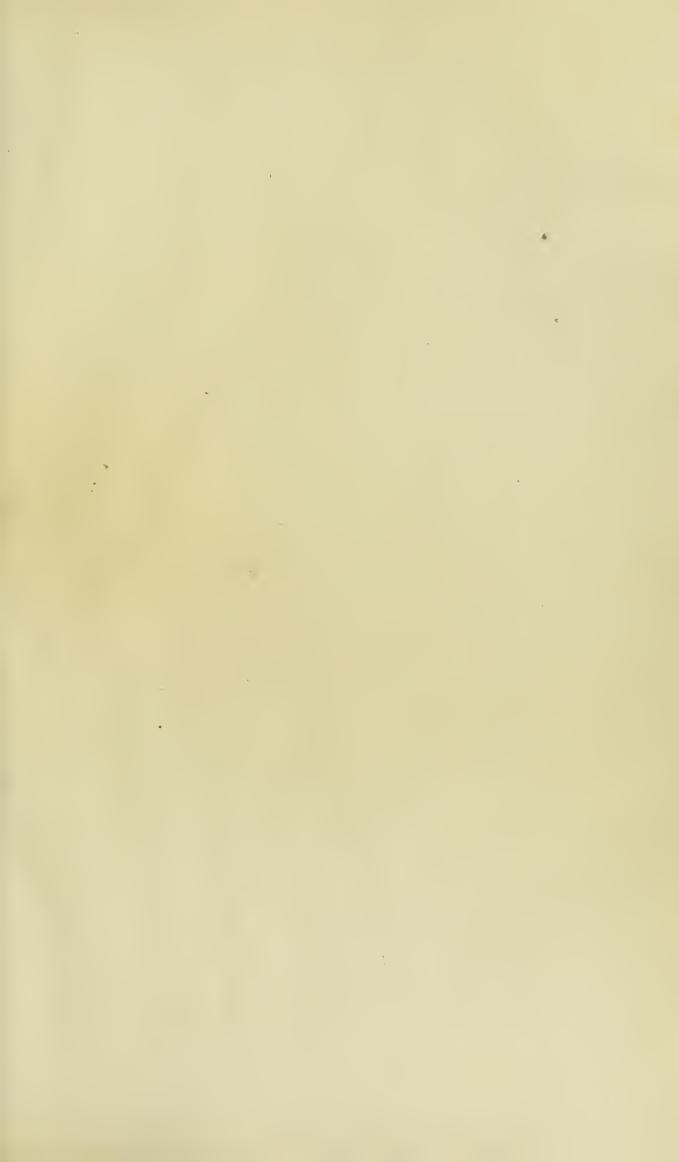
Plate 2.





DANCING GIRL.

Plate 3





PARIS



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THE PRINCESS LEOPOLDINA ESTERHAZY.

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AJAX.

By Wr W. W. Iren



HECTOR.







- tomo Labova Sculpt.

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TERPSICHORE.

Pellished by Sept in 1: Promet 201 Strand

TERPSICHORE.

(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

This Muse (whose name in the original signifies the love of the art over which she presides) is in the possession of Count Sommariva, at Paris; and, together with a Cupid and a Magdalen of Canova, form a part of the gallery of that noble Milanese, who is equally distinguished by a fine taste in the arts, and by his kind and condescending manners. Terpsichore is standing beside a short column, against which she rests her left side, in a graceful and reposing posture, on the pedestal. A lyre of a classical form is held by her left hand, in an attitude that advantageously displays her elegant person; while her right, falling easily down the side, holds in its hand the instrument with which she has awakened that sprightly music which should ever accompany the Muse of the Dance. Reposing chiefly on the right foot, that side is slightly bent inwards, and the hip thrown out in an easy and graceful manner. Elegant sandals adorn, without concealing, her delicate This graceful and symmetrical figure, thus pleasingly displayed, fills us, as we gaze on it, with

TERPSICHORE.

soft and harmonious sensations. A Grecian tunic of fine and almost transparent texture, slightly veils the beautiful forms of her bosom; and the upper drapery, descending from the left shoulder, encircles her waist in the form of a wreath, and is gathered up in a knot between her left side and the lyre on which she is leaning. The turn of her head, and her look, express all that gentle ecstacy in which the mind is held, when under the enchanting influence of music. An exact and elegant arrangement of the hair is given with propriety to this muse, whose idea is ever connected with our most refined and captivating sensations. Her tresses are bound by a fillet of unusual form, but producing an agreeable effect; and the fair, who would give every advantage to their native beauty, cannot do better than follow the models of such an artist.





THE GODDESS CONCORDIA.

Packshed by 3 fromett 26,9 Strand





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POLYMNIA.

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POLYMNIA.

(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

It has been imagined by our great antiquary, Visconti, that Polymnia was the muse of Numa Pompilius, to whose inspiration he ascribed the wisdom of his laws, and to whom, as the goddess Tacita, he caused the Romans to pay divine honours. This silent and contemplative nymph the ancients supposed to preside over meditation, mysteries, and the mute eloquence of the mimic shews. Canova has felicitously represented her seated; a posture more than any other natural and proper, to one who meditates in solitude, on thoughts which memory awakens of the past; and, in doing this, he has not greatly departed from the ideas of the ancients, who have usually pourtrayed this muse with an air of tranquil meditation, and leaning with her elbow against a rock.

If it should be objected, in respect to the posture of this statue, that the ancients did not use to represent the muses in a seated or reposing attitude, I might adduce the paintings of Herculaneum, in which Clio and Urania are seen seated, in a manner not greatly varying from this. The elegant chair in which

she reposes, is covered with a soft cushion, yielding on all sides to the gentle pressure of her person; she leans lightly against the back in an easy attitude, her head being turned towards the left shoulder, with an air expressive of tranquillity and deep thought. Her majestic person is clothed in an elegant tunic, gathered under the breast by a narrow band, and flowing down to her feet in rich folds; over this a mantle of fine cloth is gracefully disposed. Inclining somewhat to the left, and resting slightly her elbow on the arm of the chair, her hand is raised to the face, with an action that finely expresses a state of meditation. When the sculptor formed this pleasing and eloquent attitude, he must have had in his mind the following epigram from the Greek:—

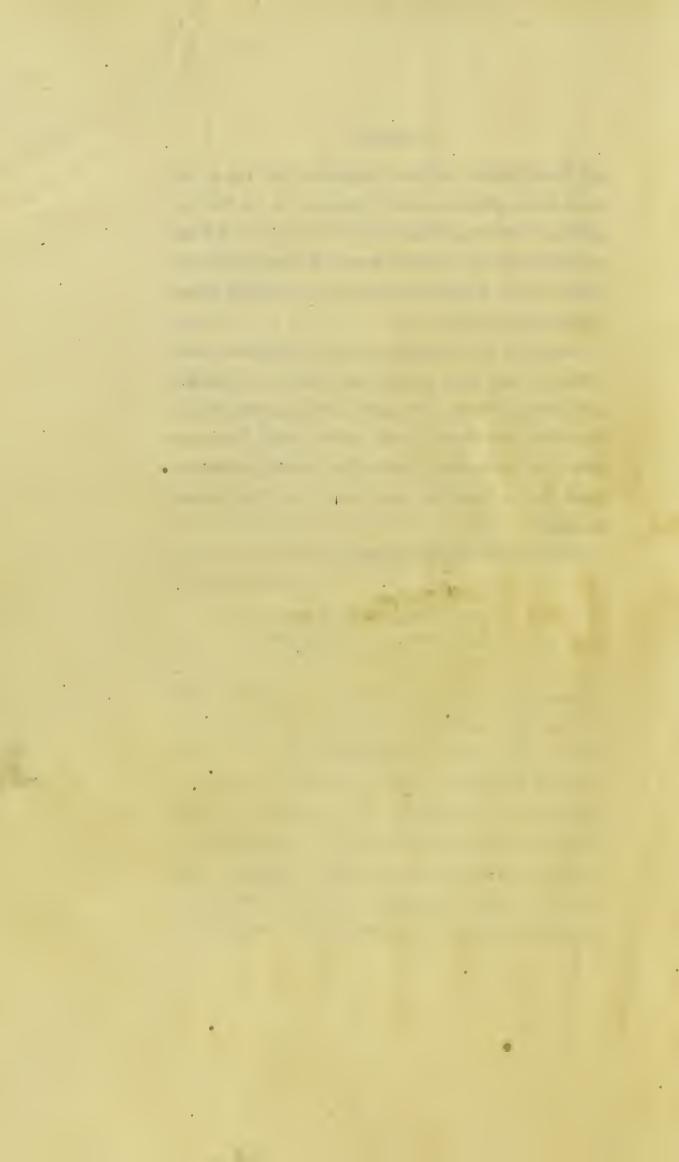
- " Taccio, ma parla in grazioso gesto,
- " Mossa la mano, e taciturna in atto,
- " Un loquace silenzio a tutti accenno."

The other hand, wrapped in the folds of her mantle, rests on her lap; the hair is arranged with all the care and elegance which become a muse, but is without the wreath of roses, which, perhaps, the sculptor deemed inappropriate to the pensive character of Polymnia, but unwilling to be wholly without this joyous symbol, he has hung on an arm of the chair a chaplet of these flowers; beneath the chair is a large scenick mask. The countenance, the hand and arm,

and beautiful feet of this nymph, the soft repose of her attitude, which, even while we gaze on her, infects us with its soothing influence; the drapery which falls around her in such rich and natural folds, all make us forget that it is a lifeless stone that is clothed with these soft and lovely forms.

Fitted by her character to raise lofty and contemplative thoughts, rather than those of a tender and amatory nature, this muse is the protectress of the philosopher, the legislator, and the artist, inspiring those high conceptions of ideal beauty and perfection, which tend so much to exalt and refine the human character.

Canova, this is thine own muse!





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Engraved by cen: Mose

PEACE.

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Engraved by Henry More.

THE GRACES.

Published by 3. Prowett, 269 Strange





Antonio Canova - 10pt

Engraved by He .rv M ise.

THE GRACES.

Plate 2.

Published by Septimus Prowett 2001 , Taul





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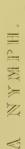
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Engraved by Henry Moses.





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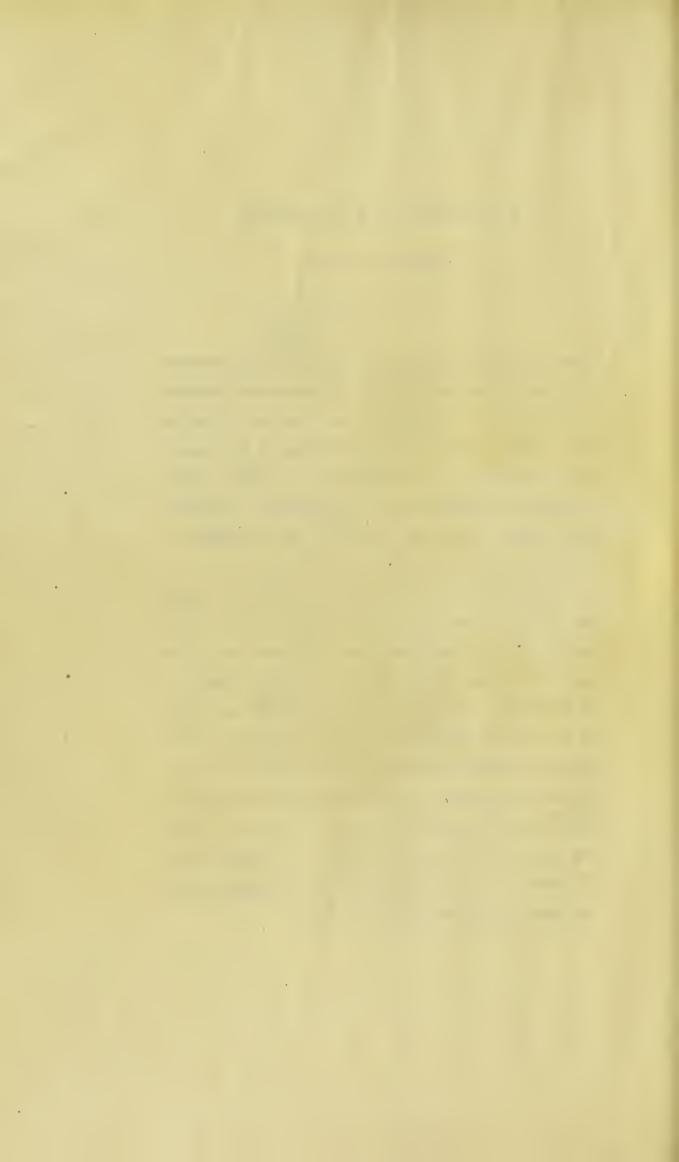
AN INFANT STJOHN.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

Canova has here represented St. John, the precursor of Christ, in the state of childhood, apparently in about the fifth year of his age; he is seated on a block of stone covered with a fleece, and holding by both hands a cross which his prophetic spirit contemplates with an aspect of affection and sad foreboding; a narrow band wound round the cross has the inscription—ECCE AGNUS DEI.

The simple nature of the subject affording no scope for the employment of the embellishments of art, the sculptor has confined himself to the expression of the pure and artless beauties which are proper to the age of childhood. We particularly admire the execution of his soft and fleshy limbs, which seem warmed and animated with the vital fluid, and the double which is formed in his body, by the curved posture in which he sits, has all the softness and pliancy of nature. While we contemplate this pleasing figure, we forget that it is a work of art, and feel as if we were approaching to caress a gentle and attractive child.







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WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON.

(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

In this fine composition Canova has not only maintained the dignity of his subject, but (warmed by admiration of the amiable qualities of this illustrious man) has also infused into this statue an expression of the gentleness and benevolence which attempered his severer virtues.

The hero is sitting with an air of noble simplicity on an elegant seat, raised on a double square base. Nothing can surpass the dignity of the attitude or the living air of meditation which it breathes; and the grandeur of the stile, the force and freedom of the execution, the close and animated resemblance to the original, all conspire to place this statue in the highest rank of art. The fine tunic which he wears is seen only at the knee, being covered by an ample ornamented cuirass; above which is a magnificent mantle fastened by a clasp on the right shoulder, and flowing down behind in majestic folds. Beneath his right foot, which is extended forward, is a parazonium sheathed, and a sceptre, signifying that the successful termination of the war, and the establishment of the laws had rendered them now useless.

WASHINGTON.

The hero is in the act of writing on a tablet held in his left hand, and resting on the thigh, which is slightly raised for its support. From the following words already inscribed on it, we learn the subject which occupies his mind-" George Washington to the people of the United States-Friends and Fellowcitizens." In his right hand he holds the pen with a suspended air, as if anxiously meditating on the laws fitted to promote the happiness of his countrymen; a border of the mantle, raised to the tablet by the hand which supports it, gives a fine effect to this graceful and decorous action. In his noble countenance the sculptor has finely pourtrayed all his great and amiable qualities, inspiring the beholder with mingled sensations of affection and veneration. This statue is only in a slight degree larger than the life; his robust form corresponding with his active and vigorous mind.

If to this great man a worthy cause was not wanting, or the means of acquiring the truest and most lasting glory, neither has he been less fortunate after death, when by the genius of so sublime an artist, he appears again among his admiring countrymen in this dear and venerable form; not as a soldier, though not inferior to the greatest generals, but in his loftier and more benevolent character of the virtuous citizen and enlightened law-giver.





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VENUS,

(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

This Venus is only slightly varied from the one which I have already noticed in a former number, and which was hardly allowed to be inferior to the Grecian goddess that exercises so propitious an influence on the destinies of Tuscany. The statue now under our notice was, however, sculptured many years later, and is distinguished by purity of design, and the most perfect and finished execution. The goddess has just come out of the bath, and is about to dry her limbs with a linen cloth which she holds in her hand; her body is modestly bent forward in a graceful curve, and her head turned towards the left shoulder, not as in the other statue, with the quick and animated glance of one who hears the approach of a beloved object, but rather with the retiring and tranquil expression of mo-The shape of this Venus is more formed dest alarm. than that of the former, and there is more of ease and repose in her posture and features; the minutest difference which so consummate an artist has thought proper to make in two models of female beauty, executed at different periods of his life, is, doubtless, highly interest-

VENUS.

ing; but I deem it prudent to desist here from a comparison which is dangerous even when between mortal beauties, and advise the lover of art to content himself, as I shall do, with tracing out and admiring the peculiar charms which each of them possess.



PIUS VI.

(A COLOSSAL STATUE IN MARBLE.)

Canova must have had in his mind, when he imagined this fine statue, that arduous moment in the life of Pius the Sixth, when he was torn from Rome notwithstanding his advanced age and infirmities, and forced to undergo the fatigue of crossing the Alps during a season of unusual rigors, the hardships of which terminated his existence.

The aged Pontiff is seen kneeling on a cushion, placed on a raised ground, which is spread with a rich carpet; every part of his venerable figure is expressive of devotion; his hands joined together—his eyes raised towards heaven—his lips separated like one wholly absorbed in ardent prayer.

The sculptor has faithfully preserved the likeness of this Pope, and also (with his admirable delicacy of touch) has given to the features an expression of that warmth of devotion and reliance on divine assistance which enabled him to maintain a firm and tranquil mind, amidst all the painful trials and dangers to which he was exposed. Beside him is placed the triple crown, and he wears on his head the solidio, a sort

of cap, whose name implies that its wearer does homage to God alone: he is clothed in a majestic sacerdotal robe, whose rich drapery extends far behind him, and suits with the dignity of his demeanour; the flower with which it is ornamented, belongs to the armorial bearings of the Braschi family.

While I was proceeding to state that this magnificent statue would be placed by the artist this very month of October, 1822, in the church of St. Peter's at Rome,* near to the steps that lead to the crypt, my pen was suddenly arrested by the sad intelligence that Canova had arrived at Venice, in a languid state of health; this rumour became on every succeeding day more alarming; and on the thirteenth we learned, to our infinite grief, that we had lost for ever this sublime genuis, and most amiable of men.

^{*} Canova in his last moments expressed great regret that he had not been able to make some slight alterations in this statue, which he had intended, and to place it in its destined site. But if ever those three parts of this noble monument, which his severe judgment thought capable of improvement, should be observed, it will be more than recompensed by the interesting fact, that this statue was one of the last subjects of his exalted mind.





THE MAGDALEN.

(A STATUE IN MARBLE.)

THE beautiful and penitent Magdalen has, in all ages, powerfully excited the fancy of the artist, and was, in particular, a favourite subject with many of the great masters of the pencil. Twice had Canova sculptured the Magdalen, in a kneeling posture, and with an expression of such utter sorrow and contrition, that it might have been thought that he had wholly exhausted his imagination on it; but in this statue we again behold the same subject, treated with new and admirable features, although representing the same epoch of her life, and sentiments of the same character as the former. This sublime figure lies stretched supinely upon a rugged stone, the lower part only of her person covered with a loose garment, and forming, by her position, a flowing line that produces a delightful effect; her eyes filled with tears, are raised towards heaven, with a look which expresses that her thoughts are wholly alienated from earth, and centred there: her unbound tresses fall neglectedly over her shoulders and bosom, and her arms are listlessly extended besides her; the right hand holding a cross which rests upon her

THE MAGDALEN.

shoulder; the other hand with the palm spread as in the act of prayer. Her person, although wasted, still shews the reign of youth, and of those charms which nature had so largely bestowed upon her, but so sunk by langour and mortification, that we wonder how marble could be made to assume such attenuated forms. A slow and feeble respiration seems to pass along her delicate neck, which is distended on one side by the posture of her head, and gives token that life still weakly animates her frame. This lovely and pathetic figure is wholly the offspring of Canova's imagination; no where else could he have found a model of such sorrow, such piety, such deep and sincere repentance.



